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A

UNIVERSITY TOWN

By W. HENRY BROWN

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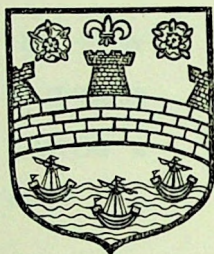
ETC., ETC.

CO-OPERATION
IN A
UNIVERSITY
TOWN

WITH THE SEVENTY YEARS'
RECORD OF THE CAMBRIDGE
& DISTRICT CO-OPERATIVE
:: SOCIETY LIMITED ::

By
W. HENRY BROWN

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CAMBRIDGE CO-OPERATIVE CHIEFTAINS

COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

MR. C. HUNT, *President*

MR. E. V. BURGESS	MR. W. FEW, J.P.
„ H. A. BURTON	MRS. D. A. GRAY
„ A. CROSS	MR. R. T. HUME
„ J. W. FARDELL	„ A. THURLEY

MR. E. DARLINGTON, J.P. *Secretary*

MR. J. QUINCEY, *General Manager*

MR. J. H. TUCKER AND MR. T. THORNER, *Public Auditors*

Presidents :

1868	Mr. J. BRACHER	1883	Mr. C. FLATTERS
1869	„ T. H. PRIME	1885	„ J. BLACK
1871	„ W. DRAKE	1886	„ C. FLATTERS
1873	„ J. H. COOKE	1889	„ G. R. MEADEN
1875	„ C. FLATTERS	1899	„ D. CROWN
1876	„ J. BIRNIE	1909	„ G. R. MEADEN
1878	„ J. STANFORD	1912	„ W. J. PRIOR
1879	„ J. BEAUMONT	1914	„ G. R. MEADEN
1880	„ J. BIRNIE	1926	„ G. J. GOLDING
1882	„ J. H. COOKE	1938	„ C. HUNT

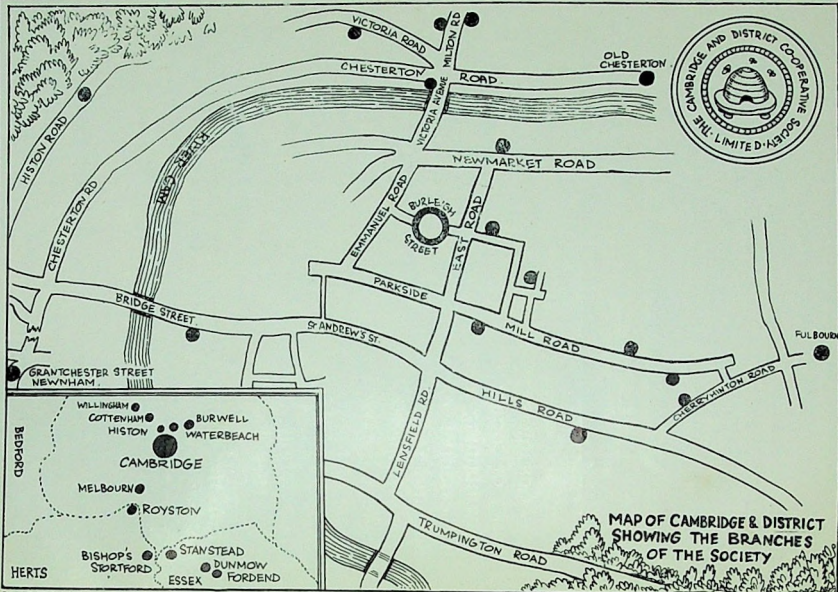
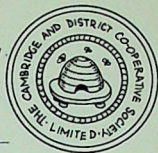
The years indicate the date of election to the Presidency. G. R. Meaden served 25 years (1889-99, 1909-12 and 1914-26), and G. J. Golding, 12 years, from 1926 till his death early in 1938 when Mr. C. Hunt, who has been a member of the Committee since the war, was elected as President of the Society.

Secretaries :

1868	Mr. P. CHURCHMAN	1874	Mr. BEN MILLS
1871	„ T. P. VERRINDER	1910	„ W. T. CHARTER
	1917	Mr. E. DARLINGTON,	J.P.

General Managers :

1917	W. T. CHARTER	1919	Mr. J. QUINCEY
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FOREWORD



URING the year of national rejoicing at the end of the War of 1914-1918, the Cambridge and District Co-operative Society celebrated its Jubilee. It was the occasion of relief from the heavy clouds that had darkened the outlook during four years of destructive ingenuity; it was also the season of grateful recognition of the constructive endeavours of the working men and women of the University town who had pursued the co-operative way of human progress. Co-operation in the distribution of the household comforts had linked producers and consumers in equitable relationship. This comity of commerce had brought domestic content in maintaining a margin between slender incomes and essential expenditure in the years between 1868 and 1914. During the War the co-operative society helped to sustain the welfare of the families harassed by the uncertainties of the years. The people of Cambridge passed through the period of tribulation with confidence and courage—in Co-operation. They began the succeeding years of the troubled Peace with a spirit of Hope.

For the committee was able to assure the 9,100 members that "societies such as this form one of the strongest supports against being governed by monopoly"—the monopoly of Big Business combined to gain advantage from the dependence of the families for their daily needs. That had been amply shown during the years of War. Co-operators intensified their loyalty to their own society. When other folks saw the cost of living soaring well above their weekly resources they

hastened to join the society that sought no private gain in the national need. Meanwhile, the co-operators speedily adapted themselves to the strangely new conditions. They were the first local employers to add a war bonus to the wages of employees to help them to meet the increased cost of living; they introduced a 48-hour week to ease the strain of those who served; they set up bread shops in convenient centres so that members could convey their daily requirements with economy to themselves; they shared their rations in rightful relationship to the family needs; they closed their shops during the dinner-hour to convenience the organisation; and they adjusted the business to harmonise with the Pauline philosophy that we "are members one of another."

Rapidity in change did not deter or delay the committee in sustaining the goodwill on both sides of the counter. By the Summer of 1917 only two employees of military age who were with the Society before the War remained at their posts—all the others were with the national forces. Women workers were introduced into the shops and trained to efficiently take the places of the men who had gone. Difficulties accumulated like leaves in autumn. The co-operators cleared them with calm confidence. From the Co-operative Bakery the troops located in the fenlands were supplied with bread—and thus the good service proved the competency of Co-operation. Nor did the missionary zeal abate. For the Cambridge Society—eliminating the rule which had previously restricted membership to within a 15 mile radius

of the town—took over the struggling society at Willingham and responded to the appeal of that at Bishops Stortford for entry to its stronghold. Thus strength and security were sustained during the years of stress and strain.

Memories quickly fade as the new generation matures. Many of those who shared in the Jubilee joys of 1919 are re-telling the stories of how the Co-operative Stores kept the home fires burning and the family fare provisioned in the stirring days of 20 years ago. And we may say, with the poet Whittier, that already—

“ Young children gather as their own
The harvest that the dead have sown,
The dead—forgotten and unknown.”

But those who shared the toil and turmoil of the grave days of 1914–1918 may feel encouraged by the reflection of John (or Lord) Morley who wrote that “when all names are blotted out and our place knows us no more, the energy of our social service will remain.”

When the Armistice was signed the Management Committee of the Cambridge and District Co-operative Society was able to proudly report :—

“ We have by adopting the policy of keeping prices to as low a level as possible under the circumstances, done much to convince all classes of the population, not only of the benefit of Co-operation, but also the futility of continuing to leave the sources of supply and the distribution of goods in the hands of those whose interest is to make profit and who were too often prepared to adopt any means to achieve their aim.”

That declaration embodies the policy that has continued, during the 20 years since it was made by the committee in the year of Jubilee. Their names deserve a place in the annals of the Society to which they gave their thought and care. Mr. G. R. Meaden was the president; Mr. E. Darlington the secretary; Mr. W. T. Charter the manager; with Mrs. D. Gray and Messrs. D. Crown, H. J. Hockley, G. J. Golding, W. Horwood, T. Barnard, C. G. Collins and J. A. Mason. The energy of their social service remains—though the names of nine of them no longer appear on the balance sheet. But Mrs. Gray and Mr. Darlington continue to uphold the faith they proved in working for others. "Service, not Self," has always been, and ever will be, the motto of those who follow the gleam of Co-operation, in the succession of the Cambridge pioneers of 1868.

* * *

A society which for 70 years has been permeating the town with a spirit of neighbourliness and goodwill and has served the community with its daily needs must be recognised as a local institution of some importance. Moreover, it affords practical illustration of some of the economic problems considered in the colleges which it serves with as much acceptance as the houses in the town. Since Dr. William King, M.D. (Cantab.) (Fellow of Peterhouse, 1812-1843), in 1828-30 advocated Co-operation as a solvent of our social ills, professors and undergraduates have given consideration to associative efforts for the establishment of equitable

relations between producers and consumers, the makers and the wearers, and those engaged in distribution. The University developed a Co-operative feeling among the colleges while the townsmen were forming their co-operative society ; and it was among the Co-operators that University Extension began.

Hence the title, *Co-operation in a University Town*, may indicate more than material welfare. It suggests the linking of all social facilities for the advancement of their mutual interests—in association with the education that enables men and women to work together, each contributing to the welfare of all. For as the Rev. J. Llewellyn Davies (Fellow of Trinity College) declared in his Hulsean Lectures delivered at Cambridge in 1890 :

“ In very early times it became evident that a living being might obtain more pleasure by co-operating with other living beings than by standing alone. Thus society began.”

Now we will proceed to consider how this Cambridge Society has obtained more pleasure and advantage for its people by co-operating rather than by standing alone. Its 29,000 members stand together.

CHAPTER I

THE YEARS OF ADVENTURE

WHEN William Cobbett travelled through the Fens in 1822, he found the condition of the labourers pitiable. He approached Cambridge by way of Royston which he described as "a common market town. Not mean, but having nothing of beauty about it." It has improved since Cobbett's time. Re-arrangement of areas for purposes of local government have transferred it to the county of Hertford; but Cambridge associations continue through the fine branch that the Co-operative Society has given the now pleasant little town. The whole region was in a poor state a century ago. Between 1823 and 1849, the average expenditure on poor-relief per head of the population in Cambridgeshire and Essex was three times greater than in Lancashire and Cheshire.

In 1837, the wages of the labourers in Cambridgeshire were 9s. 6d. per week. They fell to 7s. 6d. in 1851. Rising 3s. in the next decade, they mounted to 11s. in 1867-70. Nor were the wage-earners in the towns much better off. In the late '60's of the 19th century the wages of the highly skilled workmen of Cambridge were about £50 a year; those of the less efficient, £33 10s., and the unskilled were on a lowly plane of £25 a year. Such figures suggest meagre living, a continuous quest for domestic comfort and the almost despairing outlook of the inhabitants of the University town, as the Victorian era

developed its complacency. But if wages were lower than now, prices of commodities were not so high as at present. Eggs were sold at 16 a shilling in the Summer and a penny each in the Winter, while butter was between 10d. and 1s. per lb. Meat was a rarity in working-class homes. Many of the groceries retailed were weighted with adulterants, and nutritive fare for families' comfort was often beyond the reach of working people. Into such an environment the Cambridge Co-operative Society entered in 1869, with a sweetening influence, selling sugar at practically cost price, thus proving its desire to give pleasure in Co-operation. And as Professor J. H. Clapham has told, in estimating the place of Co-operative Societies in public esteem, by supplying "genuine foodstuffs," the Society contributed a service to the community.

Twenty years ago I wrote the Jubilee History of the Co-operative Society that has become the largest distributor of household necessities in the University town. It was based upon the written records, and documents giving the details with a completeness that was probably unique in democratic organisations. And with the personal reminiscences of the worthies who had surmounted the obstacles to collective well-doing, one was able to suggest that "Happy is the society in being able to pass along to succeeding generations the story of its origin and growth, from being an idea to becoming the greatest distributive business in the county, a link between the borough and the villages round about, and an impressive social and educative force

in Cambridgeshire. It has not reached its zenith. Every year that follows the Jubilee will add new lustre to the Co-operative calendar of Cambridge and the power of industrial democracy." That faith in the energy, the efficiency and the earnestness of the present generation in sustaining the tradition of the men and women who considered the foundation in 1868 and commenced the structure in 1869, has been justified in the present age. The Co-operators of Cambridge and District are finding pleasure in their associated effort for Culture and Co-operation.

Although there was a hazy notion that some co-operative plan had been attempted in the town in an earlier decade, the real history of the Consumers' Union in Cambridge began with the first meeting of the Cambridge Provident Industrial Society in February, 1868—the same year that the trade unions first assembled in annual Congress. There were many shoemakers about the colleges in those days making hand-sewn boots for the undergraduates. One of them going to London found a copy of Pitman's *Co-operator*. It was read and re-read by many of his friends. They cobbled and cogitated. Then they met at the house, No. 2, City Road, of C. R. Nightingale, and decided to secure for themselves and their families the advantages of Co-operative trading. They elected a committee including three shoemakers, a carpenter, a man who did odd jobs about the colleges, a builder's labourer and a few mechanics. Quickly setting to work they opened a Post Office Savings Bank account with £1 on 10th February; adopted



MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Standing : Messrs. R. T. Hume, J. W. Fardell, E. V. Burgess, E. B. Lilley (Assistant Secretary),
A. Thurley, W. Few, J.P.

Sitting : Mrs. D. A. Gray, Messrs. J. Quincey (General Manager), C. Hunt (President),
E. Darlington (Secretary), Mrs. E. E. Foister

Mr. H. A. Burton was absent when this photograph was taken. Mrs. Foister's retirement was followed by the election of Mr. A. Cross. See Page facing 64.



The present generation links gratefully with the men and women whose devotion to co-operative principles cleared the progressive path to household comfort and content. The Cambridge Society has rightly recognised the veterans at periodical gatherings of old members who, around the tea tables have rejoiced in the co-operative comradeship. At one of these gatherings Mr. Ronald Searle—one of the Society's staff whose artistic talents have brightened these pages of co-operative history—sketched some of the worthies who talked of their early efforts with pride in the achievement. They represent a generation that is passing ; but though their names are lost in the march of humanity the results of their selfless energies continue to grow and expand for the benefit of their fellows. This glance at the veterans should encourage their successors to pursue the old ideals they cherished till we have built a Commonwealth in which Equity shall prevail and the harvest shall be shared by all, according to their needs.

CAMBRIDGE PIONEERS WHO MADE THE CO-OPERATIVE PATH

their rules on 16th March, and secured their registration on 8th May. The office was at 8, City Road, where the committee met weekly at 6 p.m., with W. W. Gatward as the secretary. Those early venturers believed in intensive Co-operation, for one of the rules limited operations to localities "not exceeding 15 miles from the Society's principal place of business." And not until the War disturbed national boundaries was that rule abandoned. Then the expansive outlook prevailed and the Cambridge Co-operators went far into the fenlands—and beyond.

At 9 p.m. on the night of 22nd June, 1868, the members assembled at No. 2 City Road and elected their officers as follows:—

President: J. Bracher. *Treasurer:* W. P. Hinson. *Secretary:* Peter Churchman.

Committee: R. A. Smith, W. W. Gatward, T. H. Prime, and A. Cox.

Auditors: P. Rump and T. H. Prime.

Trustees: T. H. Prime, R. A. Smith, and A. Turner.

Much water has flowed down the Cam since the men who did odd jobs about the colleges and those who were in some of the local trades met in the house of one of their number and decided to co-operate to secure for their families the benefits of mutual trading. They considered the matter for nearly a year before they ventured. But the

time was not idled. They gathered adherents amongst their friends and neighbours. By the end of 1868 the following possessors of a share of £1 each were entered in the books of the Society :—

P. CHURCHMAN	J. TOLLIDAY
H. G. OVERTON	H. SPINKS
R. A. SMITH	E. SMITH
W. BROWN	— WISBEY
C. NIGHTINGALE	T. H. PRIME
W. HORSPOOL	P. A. SMITH
W. CRACKNELL	A. TURNER
J. BRACHER	C. BALLS
S. WELLS	G. E. MILLER
W. P. HINSON	R. J. MILLER
W. DRAKE	C. COWLEY
J. H. COOK	P. RUMP
R. MILLER	M. L. SMITH
W. A. HINER	S. ANDERSON
J. DAVIS	J. DEAN
F. BERWICK	A. COX
W. ROBINSON	

Early in 1869 this gallant band increased to 50 ; and business began. Since then the stream of Co-operation has widened and lengthened so that 29,000 members of the Cambridge Society welcome the future with a cheer. Of these many hundreds have 10, 20 and 30 years of association ; nearly 60 have a record of over 40 years of sustained loyalty to Co-operative principles and practice. One, Mr. C. E. Brown, has been a member over

CHAPTER

50 years. The others with more than 40 years of fidelity to the Society are :—

Mrs. E. LANGLEY	Mr. J. PIERSON
„ E. E. WILSON	„ G. R. MEADEN
„ C. DEAN	„ S. E. BULL
„ M. A. SHRIVE	„ R. SLINGSBY
„ E. CAMBRIDGE	„ F. WILSON
„ A. FOREMAN	„ A. SMITH
„ S. EDWARDS	„ J. BURBAGE
„ E. GRAY	„ W. BAKER
„ M. A. WOODCOCK	„ F. STEARN
„ GERMAN	„ A. MUDD
„ F. COLLINS	„ W. HARRADINE
„ J. M. LILLEY	„ A. SHELDRIK
„ E. BRIGHT	„ G. FREESTONE
„ R. HORWOOD	„ J. MOULDING
„ R. LAXTON	„ C. YORKE
Miss A. HAGGER	„ W. WOODCOCK
„ A. WILLIAMS	„ F. GILSON
Mr. BEN MILLS	„ M. FREE
„ T. RICHARDSON	„ A. AUSTIN
„ W. KNIGHTS	„ C. MANSFIELD
„ W. WOLFE	„ W. MISSEN
„ J. BURLING	„ W. LUNN
„ L. MARSH	„ A. CLEVERLEY
„ S. J. CHARTER	„ E. MUNNS
„ 'J. TINGEY	„ W. T. STEVENS
„ F. LISTER	„ A. COX
„ W. BLOWS	„ W. H. COWLING

To these Co-operators of long standing members pay tribute—an appreciation made manifest in following their fidelity to principle.

The rest of 1869 was a season of missionary effort. By February, they had won 50 adherents whose capital of £44 enabled the renting of a room at 8, City Road, for their store. In April, the newly-fledged Co-operators were so confident of success that they decided to pay their woman storekeeper a wage of 10s. a week—and were able, at the July meeting to declare a dividend to themselves of 1s. 2d. in the £. The business quickly increased and the committee decided to open the shop at 7-30 a.m.—for the people rose earlier in 1869 than in 1939. Thus the minute books of the Co-operative Society provide the data which keep professors of history attuned to actuality. Towards the end of 1869, T. P. Verrinder, a solicitor's clerk, who subsequently rendered fine service as secretary, was added to the committee.

Then came the years of small things. In 1870, a manager was appointed with a salary of £1 a week. As he had to arrive at the shop at 7 a.m., he was given a weekly half-day's holiday—to the surprise of local tradesmen, for Cambridge was not only a place of short wages, but of long hours. The sales for the first year totalled £1,082 and the 90 members were so gratified that they decided to "celebrate the anniversary with a tea party." The event attracted so much attention that the newspapers gave the Co-operative shopkeepers a paragraph all to themselves. A new manager was appointed in 1873 at a wage of 20s. a week plus $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on his turnover. He began well, getting a day off for his wedding, a member of the committee looking after the shop during his

absence. The Society joined the Co-operative Wholesale Society, to the directorate of which it subsequently nominated its managing secretary W. T. Charter, whose election in 1918 gave Cambridge national distinction. His death, in 1932, removed one who did great things for his own town and for the Co-operative Movement. The original 15s. share capital investment in the C.W.S. now stands at £200,000 in the balance sheet.

Business grew. The committee advised the 36 members at the first quarterly meeting to purchase premises in Fitzroy Street, so that they could advance from the City Road. But 23 voted against the recommendation. Three months later, permission was given to rent the shop in Fitzroy Street at £22 per annum. The committee kept closely to the details of the Society. On 16th May, 1871, they ordered some cigars to be retailed at 2d. each. These were delivered on the 19th, paid for on the 20th and sold by the end of the month. The consignment weighed 1lb.—and the order was repeated on 5th June. Then a new minute-book was required and, after much consideration, one of a foolscap size was prescribed for the secretary who was to use the blank pages of the old one for writing copies of the letters he despatched. Soon after the secretary resigned because “of the growing business of the society and not because of any disagreement.” Thereupon T. P. Verrinder was elected his successor. He continued till 1874, when Mr. Ben Mills—who continues his ardent interest in the Society he guided for many years—came into the secretarial succession.

When the premises were taken in Fitzroy Street in 1871, some alterations were necessary. Tenders were invited from nine builders who were members of the Society. That accepted was for £52 18s. 6d. and served the purpose till the building was purchased in 1876. In the intervening years the committee attended to the minutiae of business. They carried the stocks from the railway station and chopped the wooden packing boxes into firewood which they bundled for sale in the store. Even when the bakehouse was opened in 1872, the first sack of flour was baked by the treasurer—to the entire satisfaction of his colleagues. Trade had grown so greatly and customers had become so numerous by 1874, that half-a-dozen chairs were bought for the use of the members in the day and for the comfort of the committee in the evening. Metal checks were used for keeping tally of the members' purchases. These were parcelled at the end of the quarter and the committee entered the individual totals in the books. Each committeeman was supplied with coloured pencils; one quarter, blue; the next red—so that there should be distinctive uniformity with each period. On one occasion in 1875, trouble arose because a committeeman inadvertently burned the list of members assigned to him. It was reported to the members' meeting which decided that, in future, coloured ink should be substituted for the coloured pencils—but made no recommendation with regard to the danger of future fires. Nor was it till 1900 that the present Climax check system—which accurately ensures a permanent record of the members' purchases—was introduced.


In the early years goods were delivered by a handcart. This was sold when a pony and cart was purchased for £25. But the pony developed a wandering habit when the driver was at the doors of the houses of members. The conduct of the wayward animal was considered by the committee whose minutes record that "a discussion ensued on the best means to prevent such doings, and it was ultimately proposed, seconded and carried that a leather rein be purchased to fasten on the bridle and lay on the ground." A month later the pony was, by special resolution, allowed to stroll on Midsummer Common on Sunday mornings, from which it may be inferred that he had mended his ways and restrained his pace. The 40 horses* now in the Co-operative service have become more loyal in the performance of their duties. They journey speedily and stand quietly when their drivers are attending to their business. And the animals in the Society's transport are the best in the borough. For they have a distinctive place in the traffic of Cambridge and seem to have improved on the view of R. L. Stevenson—they not only travel hopefully but they arrive. And, from what I have seen on the road when, with the manager, Mr. J. Quincey, (whose pride in the horses is a potential influence), they have the Co-operative content—for they are fed with Co-operative fare in the Co-operative stables.

* The transport work of the Society now includes, in addition to the 40 horses, 60 motor vehicles and 70 cycles. These are in daily service conveying milk, etc., from farms to the co-operative dairy, goods from the stores to the homes of members and enabling the Society to collect and despatch its requirements speedily and efficiently.

By 1878, the Society numbered 207 members who were admonished by the committee to spend more than the average of 5s. 8d. a week in food supplies. That worried the committee who opened new departments—drapery and hosiery—which added to their problems. Encouragement came when they entered into the coal trade for the members were saved 2s. a ton. That venture helped all the housewives. The economical trend of the Co-operative Society was noted throughout the town and prices slackened as the home fires brightened. Co-operators, by restraining retail prices, have served the whole of the consumers and users. Those outside the circle have been warmed and helped by its example. That is abundantly evident in the annals of the Cambridge Society.

From 1868 to 1881, the committee worked without monetary recompense. They set a self-sacrificing example that was entirely creditable. True, they made mistakes ; but they helped to make the Society. In the latter year the members adjusted matters more in accord with the recognition of the position. They resolved that the committee-men should be given 6d. for each meeting they attended ; and to ensure that there should be no lost time, the meetings were to begin at 8 p.m. instead of 6 p.m., those not present within a few minutes of that hour forfeiting their remuneration for that evening. Thus the teaching of Joseph Mazzini that "Rights obtained are the result of duties fulfilled," was envisaged in the Co-operative policy at Cambridge.

FROM ONE CENTURY TO ANOTHER

OR a dozen years the Society strode forward steadily, and surely. Success brought some rippling currents into the Co-operative calm. At the first meeting in 1881, "John Barleycorn," a public-house near the stores, was recommended as a purchasable proposition. It aroused some feeling. Those who wore the Blue Ribbon of the Temperance Crusade threw cold water on the project and the purchase in the Spring of the premises then occupied for £360, seemed the end of "John Barleycorn." But he was again under discussion early in the following year when the place was purchased and the licence allowed to lapse. On the 24th January, 1882, a special meeting was held on the premises. Members decided to reconstruct the buildings, the Society carrying out the work and employing its own people. It was in that busy period, when the trade had reached £160 weekly, that Mr. Ben Mills was appointed secretary. From thence till 1910, he devoted himself to the work; and now, in the eventide of his active life, modern Co-operators acclaim him as one who directed affairs and managed well in the old days. To his earnest endeavours the Cambridge Co-operators owe much. He still takes his daily stroll along the Co-operative path he helped to make.

The next decade was one of experimental development. Farming operations on land belonging to St. John's College gave experience. But there was no profit. The members decided to leave farming to the agriculturists and concentrate on shopkeeping—dealing with consumers like themselves. They

branched out into Romsey Town opening No. 1 Branch in the Mill Road where it maintains its advancing way. The stores in Fitzroy Street were erected and plans passed for another branch in the Victoria Road. That headed the borough branches with the largest trade in groceries, bread and confectionery until the Histon Road branch came into the vicinity.

Both the town and the Co-operative Society of Cambridge made local history in 1888-89, anticipating the truth of the dictum of the Rev. J. Llewellyn Davies in his Hulsean Lecture to the University the following year that they could "obtain more pleasure by co-operating with other living beings than by standing alone." For the Local Government Act of 1888 instituted county councils, giving the rural areas administrative experience of those in the larger centres. Among the present members of the Council for Cambridgeshire is Mr. E. Darlington, J.P., secretary of the Cambridge Society, whose Co-operative foresight and insight radiate the spirit of communal service. In the following year the powers of the Cambridge Improvement Commission were transferred to the Town Council thus bringing the urban neighbourhood into full authority—an authority to which the Co-operative Party should be able to make helpful contribution.

In 1888, the Co-operators opened their bakery in James Street. That laid the foundations of their reputation for the purity of their food supply. Housewives were quick to realise the nutritive value of "Co-op. Bread," and they soon discovered

that the price was as low as the quality was high. That provided a discussion to which reference will be made a little later—for it established a principle justified by experience. Then, in 1889, the Society celebrated its 21st anniversary gratified by the results of the previous year which closed with a membership of 1,215, owning £9,146 share capital, and having a turnover of £23,604. Mr. G. R. Meaden was elected president and proved the capacity of Co-operators to raise the right men from the ranks. When, in 1894, the Society's Education Committee sought to carry its views to the Board of Guardians, he became their candidate—and was successful at the poll. Towards the close of his presidency, the idea of establishing the headquarters in Burleigh Street evolved in the minds of the ardent people who over-crowded the existing facilities for trade.

Now to revert to the prestige and position of the bakery as a factor in keeping close to the Co-operative principle of selling as near the cost price as is consistent with security. While Mr. Meaden was president the committee joined the Master Bakers' Association. Some of the watchful members fearing that the Co-operative representatives might be lessened in the strength of their Co-operative ardour protested. They did so in an orderly constitutional manner, carrying at the quarterly meeting, a resolution to the effect that:—

“This meeting, while highly approving of the general management of the committee, greatly deplors the alliance with the Master Bakers of Cambridge, and earnestly requests them to break off the alliance at once and, in the future, join no league of tradesmen for the conduct of our business.”

The resolution was carried by the members, agreeably accepted by the committee and has been regarded, by their successors, as a perpetual injunction. Co-operators can mind their own business.

In writing the Jubilee History, I naturally recorded the foregoing graceful admonition and earnest advice as a tribute to the democratic sagacity of Co-operators seeking to help their members to make the best use of their resources. This has since been quoted by Sidney and Beatrice Webb in their volume on "The Consumers' Co-operative Movement," as affording an example of the wise trend of a really democratic organisation and proof of their contention that co-operative societies will have nothing to do with associations likely to seek the maintenance of prices against the consumer. Principle had precedence over expediency.

Following the resolve to pursue their own Co-operative way, the members went well forward in the next decade, under the leadership of Mr. David Crown. Although 1904-5 saw severe trade depression in Cambridge, the Society flourished. An Emergency Fund—now continued as the Benevolent Fund with nearly £1,000 in hand—was established to help members in difficult circumstances. In 1905—the same year that land was purchased at Cottenham for a branch—the footwear department was separated from the general drapery and members were assured of good understanding. Then followed new branches at Old Chesterton, Newnham, and in Hills Road in the town.

Burleigh Street was opened as the Co-operative headquarters in 1908. The range of shops constituted a comprehensive Universal Provider and gave the people of Cambridge opportunity for obtaining all their requirements in the town. Furnishing departments were installed in the former grocery premises in Fitzroy Street, and the acquisition of cottage property in James Street gave the bakery the space it required to meet the demand that followed the withdrawal from the Master Bakers' Association. Co-operators were their own masters. Towards the end of 1910, W. T. Charter was appointed secretary, managing secretary in the next year. About that time Mr. G. R. Meaden re-appeared as president and was at the helm when the War challenged social progress. The last decade of the 19th century was one of doubled membership, doubled sales, doubled share capital, and general advance. From 1900 to 1919 was a season of phenomenal progress. Membership quadrupled, the sales quadrupled; share capital rose from £18,783 to £106,018; and the dividend returned to the purchasing members during the year increased from £4,136 to £20,289. The Society sustained the storm and stress of the War years with firm finance, sympathetic service and Co-operative confidence. It entered the Twenty Years of the Troubled Peace, looking backward with modest pride and forward with grateful hope. Certainly it had confirmed the view expressed to the students at the University in 1919 by Mr. C. R. Fay, M.A., Reader in Economic History, when he paid tribute to the "bracing effect" of the Co-operative productive societies (some of which

the Cambridge Society has aided with capital and encouraged by the sale of their manufactures), and emphasised the importance of the Co-operative Movement as a democratic organisation built up by the working classes for "the protection of themselves as consumers."*


* See "Life and Labour in the Nineteenth Century," by C. R. Fay, M.A. published by the Cambridge University Press.



JUNIOR EMPLOYEES RECEIVING INSTRUCTION
IN CO-OPERATIVE PRINCIPLES AND SERVICE

CHAPTER III

PEACEFUL PROGRESS AFTER THE WAR

ORTUNATELY for the people of Cambridge new managerial and secretarial forces came into the local Co-operative Society during the War to maintain the home front. In 1916, Mr. J. Quincey left Yorkshire to become the grocery manager at Cambridge. He had 20 years of Co-operative experience behind him and more than 20 years of Co-operative responsibility before him. Mr. Quincey put hard work alongside his innate talent to such a degree that when W. T. Charter became a Wholesale director, the Cambridge committee was convinced that there was only one man in the order of succession. So he became the general manager whose oversight of the trading department of this urban-cum-rural society carried it through the last stages of the War period and has steered it in the marketing turmoils of subsequent years.

Alongside the general manager has been Mr. E. Darlington. He came to Cambridge from Lancashire in 1917, as assistant secretary. And when the managing-secretaryship was divided in 1918, he was appointed secretary, for his sound judicial and equitable judgment had won the confidence of all. While Mr. Quincey dealt in rations, quotas, and the other mysteries of food supplies, Mr. Darlington managed the monetary problems and columned statistics—preserving the balance between credit and debit with actuarial authority. They co-operated with a goodwill that infused the staff

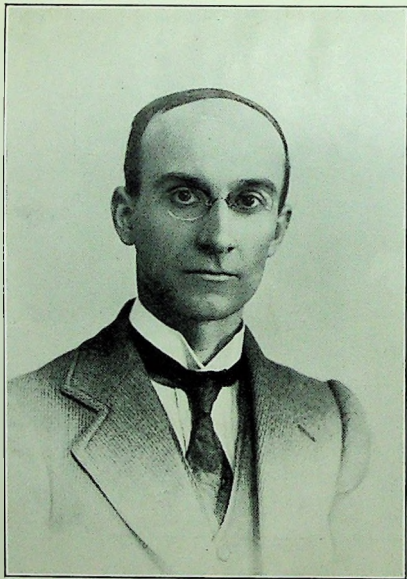
with the team spirit that has enabled members and employees to work together in the mutual interest. So they must be introduced at the beginning of a review of 20 eventful years—for they have been the counsellors of the committee whose policy they have administered with a high regard for the principles of co-operation.

Here is a summary of the progress during the present century—a testimony to the fidelity of the Co-operators and the security of their finance.

	<i>Member- ship.</i>	<i>Capital.</i>	<i>Invest- ments.</i>	<i>Reserves.</i>	<i>Weekly Trade.</i>	<i>Increased Capital</i>
		£	£	£	£	£
1908	4,970 ...	41,185 ...	6,296 ...	2,290 ...	1,802 ...	—
1918	7,967 ...	79,406 ...	23,305 ...	7,908 ...	3,727 ...	38,221
1928	16,125 ...	332,380 ...	245,681 ...	27,536 ...	9,893 ...	252,974
1938	29,061	963,267	900,369	59,727	15,259	630,887

The turnover for 1938 totalled £793,477, with an average dividend on purchases of 1s. 5d.

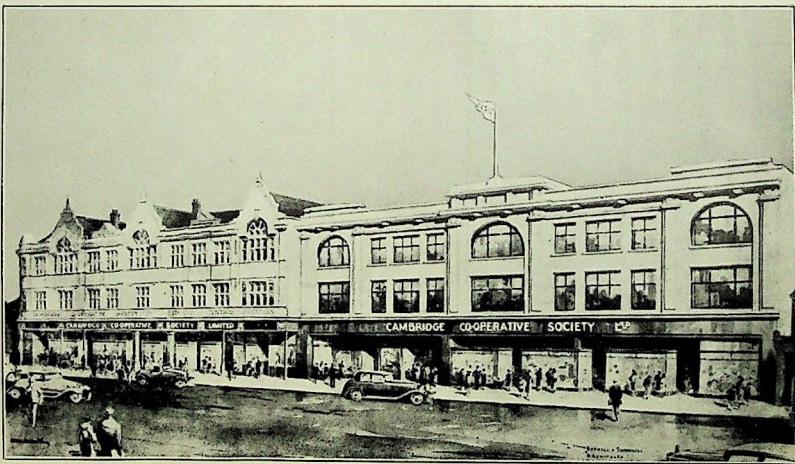
Harking back to the Aftermath of the War, 1919 was menaced with the railway strike. Cambridge was depressed with building trade disputes; and the Co-operators found their eighteenpenny dividend a gleam of comfort in the industrial horizon. They got really busy in well-doing. First they rescued Co-operation in Bishops Stortford by taking over the Society that had weathered the War but was deluged in the Armistice. The institution of a 48-hour working week proved the Society's local leadership in shop conditions and the adoption of free Collective Life Assurance with benefits graded according to purchases has been "a boon and a



Mr. E. DARLINGTON, J.P., Secretary



Mr. J. QUINCEY, General Manager



The Central Stores and Offices in Burleigh Street, Cambridge

blessing " to many in times of bereavement. With shrewd foresight a Stamp Club was organised to help the members to secure comfort for the home. £500 was invested in Cambridge Housing Bonds to encourage municipal efforts and £16,000 advanced to the Cambridge Housing Society. Many branches of trade unions sought the safety of their funds by banking with the C.W.S.—through its agency in Burleigh Street. To help employment the Society opened a tailoring workshop—for bespoke work was then the fashion.

So the months went on till the depression of 1921, when unemployment and wages cuts darkened the domestic circle. The Co-operative employees who had gone to the Front returned to their counters in Cambridge—fully recognising that the Society had loyally kept their places. But the Winter was one of want and woe in many regions of the Fens. The margin between income and expenditure narrowed perilously near the Micawberian calculation—with the sixpence on the wrong side of the account. In the Spring of 1922 prices fell; so did wages. And the Co-operative dividend fell to 1s. 2d. But the members did not falter. The Committee made 1923 memorable by the institution of a Thrift and Superannuation Scheme, securing the welfare of the employees in old-age. They opened a town branch in Victoria Avenue and one in the village of Melbourn. Property was purchased at Stansted and work begun on a bright new store at Waterbeach. Several of the shops in Cambridge were re-modelled in consonance with modern ideas; and the provision of a new outfitting department in Burleigh Street evidenced the onward policy of the

committee. Such developments meant increased transport and the erection of more commodious garage accommodation in Sleaford Street at the close of a busy year.

The Co-operative activity was in marked contrast to the conditions in the rest of the town. In their report* to the members, the committee wrote of the "scandalously low wages in the agricultural districts and the long building trade dispute" in the town—almost in line with the conditions I have outlined as prevailing before the Society began. There certainly had been some advance but:—

"Whilst during the War period, Cambridge managed to so improve its wage level as to bring it nearer to the standards existing in other parts of the country, we are now witnessing a return to the conditions which obtained before the War and which earned for this district unenviable notoriety as one of the lowest wage areas in England."

Whilst helping housewives to make the most of their slender resources, the committee strove—and continue the helpful urge—to set a standard of wages and conditions for the wage-earners as a whole. They showed how the inadequate remuneration in the unco-operative services were reflected in the decreases in the dry goods departments and, more tragically, in the fall in the consumption of bread. Mr. Darlington reviewed

* The Committee's reports are fully informative as to the course of trade conditioned by changing social and industrial conditions. They keep the members in close touch with their own affairs; and they furnish reliable data as to the ebb and flow of household budgets for the guidance of professors and students of economics. The balance sheets and the Committee's commentaries in connection with the Cambridge Society are the facts and figures of History that keep the theorists from straying beyond the fold of Actuality.

the position with secretarial acumen by issuing a chart showing the drooping average weekly sales that followed the boom :—

	<i>Average</i> <i>Weekly Sales.</i>	<i>Cost of</i> <i>Living Index.</i>
	£	
1914	2,331	... 100
1918	4,138	... 204
1920	6,841	... 248
1921	6,657	... 226
1922	6,054	... 183

The deflation continued in 1923, with the average weekly purchases of members down to 10s. 3d., reflecting the household strain. Then came a slight turn of the tide with some small improvement in employment and signs of stabilisation in prices. A sudden rise in the demand for bread suggested a straightforward advance; but this was crisped by Mr. Quincey's report that the equally sudden rise in the price of potatoes was responsible for the change in diet. Throughout the country Co-operative societies tried to balance affairs by reducing the interest on share capital. But the Cambridge Society, secured by sound depreciation, was able to maintain its 5 per cent. return and wisely invested £10,000 with the Corporation of the town. This policy of re-investing the share capital of its members in municipal stocks has continued until now (1938) it has lent £10,000 to the Corporation of Cambridge and nearly £600,000 with other boroughs and local authorities. And it has £16,000 in the Cambridge Housing Society, and £150,000 with the Co-operative Permanent

Building Society. Thus the policy which streaked through the dull days of the depression has become a golden glow.

The members of the Cambridge Society responded to the call of the committee and increased average weekly purchases to 10s. 7½d. in 1924. They had some reward in the advance of a penny in the dividend to 1s. 3d. Returning prosperity was seen in the premises in Burleigh Street, a new entrance being provided for the Co-operative Hall which had become a popular place for assembly. Extensions gave the headquarters a fine unbroken frontage of 210ft.; and pride to the Co-operators in this visible expression of their faith in the principle of "co-operating with other living beings." Meanwhile outsiders were introducing devious trade methods into the town, and various forms of credit trading entangling households in debt. The Co-operators determined to set up a Mutuality Club and a Hire Purchase system to enable their members to secure essential household goods on creditable terms—by weekly payments. Thus they are associated in plans which are organised for mutual service, rather than private gain. The Mutuality Club and Hire Purchase section is on the way to an annual turnover of £100,000 and is helping the dwellers in the villages as well as the urban population.


So the Society emerged from the dull days into the sunlight of prosperity—with confidence all the way. The dividend rose to 1s. 4d. in 1926. That was the year of the General Strike when food supplies went all awry and public opinion seemed

as colourable as a chameleon. But the Cambridge Co-operators were not perturbed, for they were fed at the regular hours according to custom. Their organisation speeded supplies along. The average weekly purchases improved to over 11s. At the meeting in the Summer the reciprocal interests of Co-operators and Trade Unionists were discussed with a view to "conversations"—the modern diplomatic term for "consultations"—with the Cambridge Trades Council; and it was resolved that Trade Unionists should be Co-operators in line with the Co-operators who employed none but Trade Unionists in their service. In that way the Comity of Labour would be realised in Cambridge.

That was the final meeting under the presidency of Mr. G. R. Meaden. For 40 years he had been associated with the Society. He was president from 1889 to 1899, again from 1909 to 1912, and then from 1914 to 1926. His leadership during a quarter-of-a-century in the presidential chair was a tribute to his prescient handling of affairs and the confidence of those who shared his responsibility in office. The name of Meaden is on the Co-operative Roll of Honour, along with that of W. T. Charter, whose local administrative experience and sagacity was continued beyond Cambridge to national Co-operative affairs.

CHAPTER IV

TO THE DIAMOND JUBILEE

N 1926 G. J. Golding succeeded to the presidency. One of his first public functions was in connection with "The Bleeding Heart" at Old Chesterton.* This had been a famous old inn frequented by the sporting folks of the Fens as well as by love-sick swains. It was acquired by the Co-operative Society and converted from a public house to a public food store. The site included a spacious yard that, in the last century, had provided fresh-air accommodation for wagons and horses. Its utilisation was a problem for the new Co-operative owners. Sensing the needs of some of the neighbouring residents they reconstructed the stabling for the garaging of motor-cars, thus solving the difficulties of local members whose houses were erected before vehicles went without horses. A dozen lock-up garages now stand where horses were stalled while their drivers solaced their nerves in "The Bleeding Heart." It is an interesting adaptation of Co-operative policy to the needs of the changing times. The customers find nutritive value where froth and liquids were previously dispensed. They have lost the licence; but have their liberty of purchase—for consumption off the premises.

A branch was opened in the Newmarket Road to serve the Abbey Estate and another the 21st, at 296, Mill Road, near where the first branch had opened 60 years before. Then followed the

* The legend lingers that this was the resort of undergraduates seeking escape from Proctorial observation.

purchase of property at the rear of the central premises in order to complete the projected modernisation of the headquarters.

But the great event of 1927 was the opening of the new dairy. In his report for 1937, ten years after the introduction of pasteurised milk into Cambridge by the Co-operators, Dr. Andrew J. Laird, the Medical Officer of Health for the borough of Cambridge, made reference to an epidemic of gastro-enteritis which was traced to the milk produced in one of the fenland parishes. Bacteriological examination of the milk proved that "clean" milk is not necessarily "safe" milk. Hence his declaration that "the only safe milk is pasteurised milk." Pasteurisation is a discouragement to the careless production of milk; and Co-operation secured the earliest supply of pasteurised milk in the Cambridge territory. The Cambridge Society has the cream of the trade—and gives dividend as an additional nutritive quality.

There was great rejoicing in the town when the Co-operative dairy in Sleaford Street was opened on 15th October, 1927, by Alderman J. E. Purvis, a member of the Public Health Committee, and a Fellow of Corpus Christi College.

He was supported by a very distinguished company which included the Mayor (Alderman J. S. Conder) and the Mayoress, the Borough Medical Officer of Health, the Chief Constable, Mrs. C. D. Rackham, M.A., J.P., and Cambridge Co-operators, whose faithfulness to principle had made the dairy a realistic evidence of Co-operative

policy. G. J. Golding welcomed the company in his presidential capacity, and the Mayor testified to his membership of 35 years having given him a sense of part-proprietorship in the enterprise. Alderman Purvis congratulated the Society on its comprehensive programme for the provision of sterilised milk with a good food content that would help to maintain the health of their people. Thus the Dairy made a good start, retailing 400 gallons a day. Within a couple of years the business grew beyond the capacity of the building and extensions had to be made to cope with the demand for Co-operative milk.

Nor was that the only big adventure on the Sleaford Street site that year. It is well served with a private goods siding from the railway. Hence its suitability for the grocery warehouse, where goods are packed and despatched to the various branches. There, too, the new bakery was projected—a work made necessary by the growing membership in the widening area of the Society.

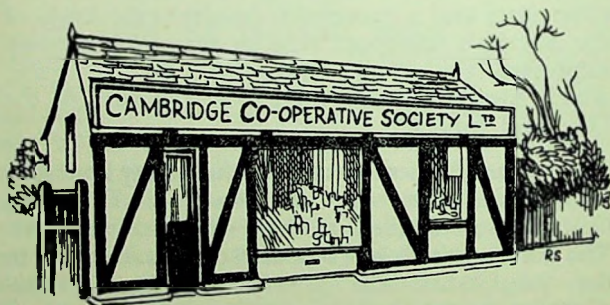
Then came the Diamond Jubilee. It was a season of practical rejoicing. In the first six months the average weekly purchases of the members reached the record of 12s. 3½d. and the dividend rose to 1s. 5d.—a level of return that has become almost a standardised allocation. Dividend is not the main return. That of Cambridge is a consistent result of economy in direction, efficiency in administration and the loyal team-work of employees and members in unison of purpose. The share capital increased by £39,000 and reflected the improvement in local conditions. Taking

advantage of the fuller purses in the country, so-called "Co-operative" Investment Trusts were circulating their specious leaflets among small investors—and the Society sternly warned members against such inversions of the Co-operative idea. Thus they safeguarded the people whose savings were their only protection for the future. The average share holdings of the Cambridge Co-operators were £15 10s., a satisfactory advance from the £9 ten years before. At the Diamond Jubilee demonstration at the Guildhall, it was announced that the dairy project had justified itself, the sales of milk being 5,600 gallons a week—and the farmers of the fenlands joined in the rejoicings. The annual sales are now 1,000,000 gallons.

So the year went merrier than most years. The loyal elder members of the Society were entertained to "High Tea" in their own Co-operative Hall, gladdened in the comradeship of those in the tradition of the pioneers. An outdoor fête on the Town Football Club ground enthralled the youngsters and a procession (quarter-mile long) of the Society's transport vehicles through the town impressed the public. So, too, did the trade, which turned the half-million in the year of the Diamond Jubilee.

That year the Society crossed the county boundary into Essex. In the old town of Dunmow, Co-operation seemed to have internal weakness. The Society which had rendered economic service to the inhabitants was slowly declining. Local efforts at revival proved unavailing and the people of Dunmow appealed to Cambridge. So the Society

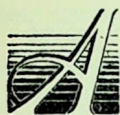
threw out the safety-line and took the Society as a branch dealing as equitably with the shareholders as it had done with the societies at Willingham and Bishops Stortford in the previous amalgamations. Now there are two flourishing Co-operative outposts in that area, and the Co-operators are as happy as those who win the Flich. So the Diamond Jubilee became a time of intensive and expansive renewal of the faith. Nearly 2,000 new adherents were entered in the books at Burleigh Street; and a grant of £2,000 to the Employees' Superannuation Fund concluded a memorable season of jubilation. The Employees' Superannuation and Thrift Fund now totals £50,000 and a dozen of those who have rendered long service are enjoying their pensioned leisure.



The Co-operative Store in Fulbourn Village

CHAPTER V

THE LAST DECADE

FTER the stirring events of the Diamond Jubilee, the committee settled down and took stock of the membership which was nearing 20,000. Two-thirds of them lived in Cambridge; the others in 120 villages and hamlets of the county and on the borderlands of Essex and Hertfordshire. Those with the largest percentage of the population in the Co-operative ranks were Histon, Cottenham, Stansted, Willingham, Melbourn, and Fulbourn. There were strong groups at Bottisham, Comberton, Dry Drayton, Fen Ditton, Girton, Grantchester, Harston, Horningsea, Lode, Much Hadham, Quy, Sawbridgeworth, Teversham, Wilbraham, Ford End, Felstead, and many other places, all regularly served from one store or another. The census revealed that transport organisation is one of the great problems of management. In 28 villages the membership was 5 or less; in 26 places it ranged from 6 to 20; in 33, from 21 to 50. But the same care was, and is, taken to supply those who live in isolated hamlets as those in the more populated area. A review of the geographical distribution of the membership was the prelude to a series of trade campaigns and educational propaganda to secure new members—and then to convert them into Co-operators. The records for 1938, are comparable with those for 1929, although they cover a larger number of villages and more might be included in the foregoing list of distinguished Co-operative centres. And, of course, Burwell,

Bishops Stortford, Dunmow, Willingham and Royston have risen, Phœnix-like, from the ashes of former societies.

Continuing the policy of settling its own prices—without direction from other retail bodies—the Society sacrificed £500 in revenue in the Summer and Autumn of 1929 by retailing milk at 6d. per quart. That was a gain to Co-operative families. And it proved an economy to consumers outside the Society when other retailers “followed the Co-op.” The opening of the 25th branch—in Milton Road—was an encouraging approach to a residential area. And the extension of the coal wharf at the coal depot of the L.N.E.R. helped to keep more home fires burning that Winter. The coal trade was in some perplexity owing to impending legislation; but the Co-operative Society secured supplies for their members that proved their good place in the business. This was recognised by the other societies in the South of England, who elected Mr. J. Quincey to the National Executive of the Co-operative Coal Trade Association.

The next few months saw slumping prices in the grocery section and spending power reduced by a season of unemployment. Meanwhile the central premises in Burleigh Street were appearing in their new dignity and architectural grace. The facade of the great block of buildings caught the imagination of the public and many a distant resident sauntered through the main highway to see how the Co-operative Society had provided a new shopping centre for the town. The work had been seven years in progress to the comprehensive

completion—and it was accorded high praise from all anxious for the artistic and cultural tastes of Cambridge finding expression in the buildings of the town.

On 22nd November, 1930, the extensions were opened for business. Old members crowded along to witness the realisation of early hopes; new ones participated in the pleasure of co-operating with other people in the society of good intent and great performance, and from Whitehall, the Rt. Hon. A. V. Alexander, Civil Lord of the Admiralty, joined in the throng of practical household economists. On the same day the new bakery in the Sleaford Street Co-operative colony was officially inaugurated by Mr. C. Hunt—then a member of the committee and now the President—and a goodly company of the members. Not many remembered the historic occasion when the business meeting decided that the Co-operators should steer clear of the commercial leanings of the Master Bakers; but all knew that the Co-operative bread was of good report; and that the price was equitably adjusted to give the bakers a decent standard of life and the consumers a square deal—and a good meal. The present annual supply of 1,250,000 quartern loaves is sufficient proof.

Cambridge suffered another spasm of bad tidings in 1931—for the local industries had little work. The resultant employment was reflected in the balance sheet which showed a modified increase of 1.05 per cent. in the sales for the first half-year and a decrease of 0.28 per cent. in the second. But no one was dismayed. A new boot repairing workshop was opened and an outfitting venture

quickly found favour. To meet the changing household habits a cooked meat factory was opened. Wives soon found its appetising and nutritive qualities which have made it into one of the most popular of the Society's productive undertakings. Then, to incite the members to closer loyalty to their own concern the committee commenced the publication of their average purchases, along with those of the married employees, the educational committee and the members. For in that dolorous period the weekly trade of the latter had dropped from more than 12s. to 11s. 7d. The fact that the purchases of the Management and Educational Committees were more than four times those of the members and that the employees spent over three times as much with the Society as the members they served, proved the fidelity of those responsible for policy and administration. The members, as a whole, should strive to get level in loyalty with those they elect and those they employ. That was the lesson publicly made known in 1931—and still kept to the fore in the reports to the members. Some have yet to practise the teaching; but all can learn—and the average of £1 a week should be reached by those who read the history of their own Society.

A bright missionary enterprise of the early 1930's was the incorporation of the Burwell Society with the big brother of Cambridge. Burwell had known Co-operation for well over 40 years. The accounts had been audited by two enthusiastic Cambridge secretaries: Mr. Ben Mills, in the early years, and then by Mr. E. Darlington, J.P.

So they were right. And as a branch of the Cambridge Society, Burwell is right.

The early meetings of the Burwell Society in 1890, were held in Rose Cottage, the home of the president, G. Peachey. G. Hanton was the secretary and the membership of 68 traded to the extent of £458 in the last quarter of the first year. Their expenses were less than £25, including £9 13s. 3d. for wages and a weekly rent of 2s. When Mr. Peachey retired from the presidency in 1892, the quarterly meetings were transferred from Rose Cottage to the British schoolroom, and W. Casburn took the reins. With sales of £542 in the first three months of 1893, the dividend rose to 2s. ; it advanced to 2s. 6d. in the Summer and reached 3s. in the Winter. It advanced to 4s. in 1897, and reached the peak—5s. in the £—the next year. A review of the balance sheets from the beginning, for the sight of which I am indebted to Mr. C. Campbell (one of the first five members of the committee on which he rendered long service), shows that the capital accrued mainly by the accumulation of the dividend. In the Summer term of 1898 only £1 was subscribed in cash to the share capital; £186 was withdrawn. But the share capital of the 250 members advanced from £602 to £813 by the addition of the dividend declared in the previous quarter. The premises were extended and by 1907 the members were able to meet in their own room over the stores. Then the slackened employment in the district reduced the sales to less than they had been a decade before. The stress of life in the village of

Burwell during the next 20 years was reflected by the trade remaining stationary though the membership increased to 368 in 1927. They persevered till they found a safe haven in the security of the Cambridge Society.

The balance sheets of the next few years are illuminating records of the way in which financial and Governmental influences affect the family table. As long ago as 1919, Councillor Mrs. C. D. Rackham had drawn attention to the impending conflicts between Commercialism and Co-operation in Parliament and in Whitehall. Political obstacles had been threatening the Co-operative Movement during the War causing the Co-operative Congress in 1917 to adopt a resolution moved by W. T. Charter—on behalf of the Co-operative Union, of whose Central Board he was a member—favouring Co-operative representation at Westminster. The Cambridge committee endorsed Mrs. Rackham's plea for monetary support of the principle. Thus the Co-operative Party came into the political arena in Cambridge. The Corporation Profits Tax was the first great imposition to be exposed. The Finance Act of 1933 brought Co-operative Societies (which shared the surplus of trade among the members whose purchases made the surplus) to the level of the joint stock concerns which divide profits among the investors—with no allocation to the purchasers. That measure resulted in the destruction of the legislative recognition of the mutual trading of Co-operators which had been acknowledged since the Industrial and Provident Societies Act of 1852.



The Co-operative Household Service



Royston—now in the Cambridge Circle



EDUCATIONAL COMMITTEE

Standing : Messrs. A. W. Carse, L. J. Neech, Mrs. E. Cole, Mr. W. A. Cash (Treasurer)
Sitting : Mrs. N. Abraham, Mr. A. W. Brown, Mrs. K. Summerlin, Mr. S. J. Drane (Secretary),
Mrs. A. Nelson

Explaining this topsy-turvy action of the Government to the members, the Cambridge committee showed that, in the first year of the imposition it had inflicted a tax equivalent to a $1\frac{1}{4}$ d. dividend on the trade of the Society. This was a heavy burden on those in uncertain employment requited by scanty wages. Last year the Income Tax and N.D.C. imposition on the Cambridge Society was £5,000, equal to $1\frac{3}{4}$ d. on the dividend.

Accumulations of share capital, partly owing to the accession of members from the residential areas and salaried persons who realised the advantage of Co-operative trading, opened a new problem which required urgent solution. Municipal and Government securities lowered their rates of interest; and the Cambridge Society found it difficult to profitably invest the savings of members, for interest had been paid at 5 per cent. from the start. A few years before, a general lowering of share interest had taken place throughout the Co-operative Movement. The shrewd financial oversight of the Society's affairs delayed such a necessity at Cambridge. But it was inevitable. In 1932, share interest was reduced to $4\frac{1}{8}$ per cent., and that on loan capital to $3\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. The confidence of the members in the security of the Society continued the flow of their savings into the Co-operative channel. In the five years before, membership had gone up 40 per cent.; the share capital mounted 80 per cent. And, following the reduction of interest, the capital maintained its continuous increase. So in 1936, the rate of interest was again revised, shares receiving $3\frac{3}{4}$

per cent. and the loan capital, $3\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. Still, the capital comes along. The legal shareholding limit is £200 share capital. Further investment must be in the form of loan capital. Careful savers rely on the non-speculative character of co-operative finance. It has nothing of the risks of the Stock Exchange nor does it savour of the chance hazard of the football pool. Co-operative money is devoted to purposes of mutual trade and public utility. At the end of 1938, the Cambridge and District Co-operative Society was entrusted with the share capital of £654,733, and loan capital of £281,314—owned by its 29,061 members.

Not content with raiding Co-operative nest-eggs the authorities have invaded the household larder. Quotas, subsidies, tariffs and other irritants that ruffle the peace of the nations dependent on trading relations for the comfort and content of their people have added to family worries and international misunderstanding. Several have been exposed by secretarial and managerial experience. One illustration that aroused much condemnation in 1935, was in connection with bacon. Political theorists propounded the notion that restriction of imports would revive British piggeries and give British families an abundance of breakfast fare. So, when bacon was selling at an average price of 1s. per lb., the "restorative" restrictions were imposed. Within a short time the average price jumped, nearly 50 per cent., to 1s. $5\frac{1}{2}$ d. The result was that, during a given period, the sales of bacon by the Cambridge Co-operative Society slumped from 235 tons to 158 tons—and many breakfast tables were bereft of eggs and bacon.

Practical Co-operators demonstrated the truth enunciated by Professor T. H. Huxley at a British Association meeting that "many a beautiful theory may be upset by an ugly fact." Even collegians may gain knowledge from Co-operators—as Co-operators may learn from the colleges.



In the Cooked Meats Factory of the Cambridge Society

See Page 46

CHAPTER VI

COMMITTEE GUIDANCE IN THE PRESENT



MID all this high finance, domestic affairs have their well-proportioned place. There is a tutorial aspect in the business meetings where members assemble to review the past and prospect the future. In the beginning, quarterly reports filled the programme; then half-yearly records were in vogue for many a year. As the departmental activities increased to ten and the branches to thirty, details accumulated and the columns extended so fully that, for statistical and calculating purposes, the report has become an annual one. The first annual report and balance sheet issued by the Society was for the period ending 30th November, 1937, when the sales exceeded three-quarters of a million and over £52,000 was returned to the members in the form of a dividend—1s. 5d. in the £, in spite of the fact that £1,000 had to be set aside to meet the National Defence Contribution which, originally intended as a deterrent to profiteering in armaments has been contrived into an imposition on Co-operative trading.

That annual report—the first yearly compilation of the Cambridge Society—is a historic document for, apart from the great London and the Royal Arsenal Society, other societies in the provinces continue their half-yearly statement. Recognising that it had outgrown the methods which made quarterly stock-takings a necessity and half-yearly statistical returns desirable, the Cambridge Society has, with characteristic business judgment established

the principle of the annual report. It has been well received by the members for it details essentials and deals concisely with material things. A glance at that for 1937—the first of the kind—will indicate its informative and educational nature.*

Having given the total sales they are reduced to the weekly takings, £14,447, an increase established by the members spending a weekly average of 2d. each more in 1937 than in the previous year. An average increased weekly expenditure of 1s. each would have carried the weekly turnover to over £16,000—a fact which they are invited to establish in the present year. For it is never too late to spend—provided it is done before the closing hour at the store. Then follow reflections on the continued decline in the demand for bacon, jam and bread—resulting from disturbance with the natural course of business. More satisfying was the substantial increase in the butchery department which has given encouragement to home production—a phase of Co-operative enterprise that interests the farmers in the fenlands with whom the Society has reciprocal trading relations. They constitute a gratified group of the membership; and their supplies to the Co-operative abattoirs testify to the agricultural quality of East Anglia. “While the cost of meat steadily rose over a considerable portion of the year,” said the committee, “retail prices were kept down to a level which allowed no margin beyond the expenses of handling”—a distinct benefit to the housewife.

* Long ago Mr. E. Darlington advocated the institution of annual reports, his arguments in the official organ of the N.U.C.O. arousing interest throughout the Movement. The Cambridge initiative is a distinct contribution to national policy.


In dealing with 853,581 gallons of milk, the Society is on amicable terms with Cambridgeshire farmers and also with Cambridge scholars. For it supplies elementary and secondary schools, and some of the college.

The work of the other sections was prefaced with an ominous note as to the individual and collective outlook for "at a time when, *owing to the rising costs of foodstuffs*, members have been compelled to economise on clothing and household requirements, we consider the increases in the dry goods sections satisfactory." The Society had instituted a funeral furnishing and monumental masonry department at the beginning of the year, thus adding to the comprehensive service it renders. The sympathetic and efficient way in which it was rendering service in times of bereavement was already commending its inauguration. On a more cheerful note the committee noted the setting-up of a Travel Bureau for the guidance of Co-operators to holiday resorts and for the organisation of pleasure parties—travelling by road, rail, steamship, or aeroplane. This started well and has rapidly proved its usefulness as an agency for issuing railway and motor-vehicle tickets and as a box-office for the London theatres. Co-operators have been accustomed to the pleasures, and pains, of business ; at Cambridge they have entered into the business of pleasure, without regrets. Here they deal with Holidays, with Pay—and no bad debts.

So one might write on—but that was from the annals of 1937. Those of 1938 have the same factual contents—as figures on page 32 have shown.

CHAPTER VII

EDUCATIONAL ENDEAVOURS

NCREASING leisure and the changing social conditions have influenced the educational committee in adapting its programme to the new needs and the heavy responsibilities of those elected to maintain the Old Ideals. The evening classes, libraries and news-rooms which were established by Co-operative Societies before such cultural facilities came into the sphere of civic life are now rightly regarded as on the fringe of Co-operative effort. The educational committee of the Cambridge Society has been mindful of the duty it owes to the community by encouraging the success of such public institutions. It sees that they are supplied with Co-operative publications and advises the library authorities with regard to new books likely to interest Co-operators in serving the communal purposes. And it also encourages the members to make good use of the facilities for study and reading provided by the local authorities in the many areas which the Society operates. Thus the educational zeal of the pioneers is sustained in a generation that has been to school; and might otherwise be in danger of forgetting its lessons.

Association with the educational work of the borough has always characterised the Society. For many years encouragement was given to members to attend the School of Arts and Crafts. Now the children of members, and the members as well, who attend classes at the Cambridge Technical

School Evening Institute have half their fees paid, provided their attendance through the session is as good as their intentions at the beginning. For the employees of the Society the educational committee arranges classes in subjects likely to increase the efficiency of their service. Instruction of a vocational kind adds to their interest in the daily round and thus establishes their confidence in the Co-operative outlook.

Recently the institution of First Aid instruction in connection with the St. John Ambulance has proved a popular phase of the educational work. Its practical value has already found proof in several departments of the Society where the employees have responded to the call of the committee. First-aid is often as useful in the shop as in the home. Hence the provision of first-aid courses for the adult male employees and of classes in home nursing for the females engaged in the Society's service.

Within the town the Co-operators are able to participate in the amenities that are created by the social instincts of large populations. In one of their reports they wrote that they "worked like bees and never stung one another." In the villages and scattered households of the fenlands, loneliness often develops into isolation. Village halls and institutes have proved helpful in bringing people into neighbourly concord. Throughout the wide area of the Cambridge Society the local clergy of all denominations and social workers in many causes have done their part in rippling the apathetics into

human interests. The Co-operative enthusiasts have taken a fraternal part in the awakening of the rural population.

G. J. Holyoake, whose story of the Rochdale Pioneers was the most potent advocacy of Co-operation in the Victorian Age was the main influence in inciting Cambridge Co-operators to the educational avenue. He attended a meeting of the Society in the Working Men's Club in April of 1877. It was preceded by a public tea that he did not thoroughly enjoy for, in his picturesque phrasing, "the tea fell on the floor and the paper was put into the pot. The University had drunk all the cream." J. W. Cooper, a resident lawyer, presided over the meeting where Holyoake deplored the fact that the Society seemed "underfed with capital. There is no education fund," he said, "which means that the members have their minds pinched and do not know it." Evidently they pondered over the provoking analysis of the Co-operative historian for, three years later, they held an educational gathering when Tom Hughes for the Co-operative Union and Hodgson Pratt for the Guild of Co-operators explained the deeper implications of Co-operation to the members with whom were assembled many University people including Miss A. J. Clough, Professors Stuart, Seeley and Caley, and such distinguished College dons as Sedley Taylor, H. Sidgwick, Oscar Browning, W. G. Garnet, and J. E. C. Weldon—a company of Co-operation in Education and of Education in Co-operation.

Fifty years ago the Co-operative educational committee of that day made the experiment of holding a propaganda meeting in the country. Trumpington—one of the suburbs of the town that seemed a long way from the centre of Co-operation in Cambridge—was the starting point. The vicar, the Rev. E. B. Birks, lent the church schoolroom. It was decided to arrange a tea followed by a meeting to explain the purpose of Co-operation. Those who did not take tickets for the tea were admitted to the meeting on payment of a penny. The parish constable was given a ticket for the tea and thus accorded an official status. From every viewpoint the missionary effort was worth while. At the next committee meeting the candidates for membership from Trumpington included the police constable who had been generously regaled with refreshments, a laundress, a gardener, a groom, a labourer, a miller and a railway servant. This census of occupations is an interesting sidelight on the class of people who were being attracted by the new order of shopkeeping.

Nowadays the tea meeting has lost its appeal; and the radio has broken into the lonely calm of the evening. The Cambridge Co-operators have recognised, with Tennyson, that "new occasions teach new duties," and that the old ways do not answer in a modern age. So the meetings have been translated into "popular evenings" with Co-operative concert-parties, the Society's own Choral Society and the Beehive Orchestra contributing to the pleasure of the gatherings where members of the management and educational

committees give the good tidings of Co-operative advance. Thus the propaganda work serves to brighten the Winter dullness and to spread the news of Co-operation over the fenlands. Having attended many of these meetings in the small townships and villages, I can testify to their splendid spirit of amity—and to the good feeling they engender between town and country. For in all the places the local members and employees work in harmony to give cordial greeting to those from the centre.

During the Summer the missionary effort is continued along the countryside with fetes and joyous festivals in which the earnest talk of the elders is punctuated by the laughter and merriment of the youngsters—the Co-operators of a few years ahead. Such social assemblies are held in the fields or playing-fields; sometimes they take place in the gardens of a great house whose owners delight in co-operating in the pleasure of others—the first of the tenets of the social gospel of Co-operation. Memorable to the 2,500 people about Dunmow was the gathering at Easton Lodge, when the Countess of Warwick gave, and got, joy with the Co-operators. A few years ago the annual fete of the Society on the Town Ground in Cambridge was the event of the year. It succeeded so well that its success was overwhelming. More than 10,000 crowded to the festival; to avoid disappointment to the thousands who could not be accommodated, it was allowed to slumber into memory.

Each year the educationists participate in the Society's Propaganda Campaign when the shop windows are at their best and the delivery vans

look their brightest. Going out into the wilderness of Competition, the Co-operators seek to bring the housewives and their husbands into the Co-operative fold of household security and domestic content. Eloquence and goodwill flow from the platforms and response in membership comes from the audiences. For these Cambridge standard-bearers of Co-operation believe with Charles Kingsley in taking people by their leading ideas and drawing them insensibly to our own. So that the lesson shall be learned, an essay competition open to all the towns and villages leads people to assimilate the teaching and express it in their own words, as well as in their own purchases. The former may win a prize; the latter certainly will have a dividend.

The educational committee seeks more than the wise use of the evenings of the daily toil. Co-operation during the holiday season fill the Winter with happy recollections of Summer outings. Trips to Blackpool and Brighton have given these inland folk glimpses of the North and South, while excursions to French and Belgian seaside resorts have widened experience. The excursions have proved the foundation of the Society's Holiday and Travel Bureau that is proving the vitality of the Co-operative principle in pastime as well as business. Annual excursions given to the successful candidates in the examinations are arranged to Co-operative centres, factories or warehouse, to enlarge the view of associative effort. Nor must the popular outings to Whipsnade be overlooked. They constitute a commentary on Prince Kropotkin's once famous book on *Mutual Aid in the Animal Kingdom*.

Moreover, large excursion parties to the C.W.S. and other productive works within the Movement have emphasised the importance of Co-operative production as a means of the self-employment of Co-operators. The Society, by obtaining over 70 per cent. of its stocks from such sources is proving its fidelity to principle.

The Educational Committee is ever alert to the new needs of the age. It is encouraging the dramatic art of its members and has assisted the formation of an association of other committees in, and on, the borders of the county to develop local talent. This was inaugurated by a Dramatic Festival in the Co-operative Hall at Cambridge at the end of 1938.


There has been a succession of zealous secretaries of the Education Committee during the last two decades. Miss E. Parnell was followed by Mr. R. C. Yelland in 1922; then came Mr. H. A. Burton and Mrs. E. Dyson. Mr. S. J. Drane filled the office from June, 1924, to the middle of 1926, when Mr. G. Dyson continued till August, 1936. In that month Mr. S. J. Drane resumed the secretaryship which he sustains with ardent interest. The Co-operators have elected the following to carry on the good work of the Educational Committee:—

Mrs. N. ABRAHAM. Mr. A. W. BROWN
(*Chairman*).

„ E. F. COLF.	„ W. A. CASH.
„ A. NELSON.	„ A. W. CARSE.
„ K. SUMMERLIN.	„ L. J. NEECH.
Mr. S. J. DRANE, <i>Secretary</i> .	

CHAPTER VIII

THE ADVANCE OF THE WOMEN

HOUGH the men of Cambridge proposed Co-operation, we must acknowledge that the women of Cambridge prospered it. True the safety of the Society and the serenity of the store was jeopardised in 1869 by the lady storekeeper, Mrs. P——, who did not dust the windows nor sweep the floor. But the committee were shrewdly diplomatic in their handling of the domestic problem. They sent a letter to their storekeeper informing her that “they think it their duty hereby to inform her that for the future they will expect that the shop floor be swept every morning, the counter, canisters, scales, shelves, bottles, etc., be dusted and kept as far as possible in a clean and business-like manner.” So that she should have no excuse for neglect, they added, “if Mrs. P—— requires any dusters or other articles to enable her to carry the foregoing request into effect she can have same upon application.” This letter of admonition was sweetened by the final paragraph which read:—

“The committee will hold another special meeting at the termination of a month from this date to take into consideration and report to the next quarterly meeting the subject of increase of salary to the storekeeper; but such a report in her favour will be conditional upon the manner in which the foregoing suggestions of the committee are carried into effect.”*

* The wording of this letter is a tribute to the legal knowledge of T. P. Verrinder, a solicitor's clerk, who was elected to the committee in 1869 and acted as secretary till 1874.

When the quarterly meeting was held, Mrs. P—— had quitted her post. But the shop was in order; for the committee had spent three hours in cleaning the ceiling, the secretary carrying in a dozen pails of water to facilitate the proceedings. Such devotion enlisted the loyalty of the women. Mrs. Purchaser came along and the purchasers have sustained the Society.

While women were thus co-operating in the interest of their families another group were associating for the educational advance of their sex. There is an interesting link between the women Co-operators and those who fostered the movement for the higher education of women. For the daughter of J. Llewellyn Davies, who was a Fellow of Trinity College (1851-59), became the secretary of the Women's Co-operative Guild; and his sister, Miss Emily Davies, was the hon. secretary of the committee for obtaining the admission of women to University Examinations from 1862 till its success in 1869. She convened a meeting in London at which Dr. Kennedy, Sedley Taylor, James Stuart and other Cambridge men endorsed her proposal for a Teaching College for Women. The result was the opening of a College at Hitchin with four pupils who listened to the lecturers from Cambridge while Miss Davies sat in the same room, listening and knitting all the time. There were, however, difficulties in the way of teachers travelling to Hitchin so, in 1872, the College was removed to Girton where the twenty-ninth Co-operative branch has now been established.

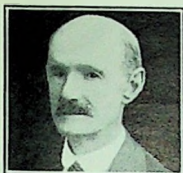
Meanwhile another stream was entering the educational flow of the University and town.

Under the leadership of Henry Sidgwick and his wife, lectures were being given to the women of Cambridge. A house was opened in Regent Street for the accommodation of those who came from a distance. Miss A. J. Clough* organised the effort so well that it removed to larger buildings—first behind St. John's College and then to Norwich Street—and ultimately to a new building at Newnham, in 1875. The College has a Co-operative store among its neighbours.

Thus Girton and Newnham came into the thought of Cambridge. Closely associated with the institution of these two colleges for women was the memorial from women outside the University town for the establishment of an examination to "test and attest" the attainments of women. This was signed by many important men associated with the colleges, the first four columns being headed by the names of F. D. Maurice, Charles Kingsley, H. R. Luard, and E. T. Perowne, and its prayer was granted by the Council of the Senate.

Time Marches On! But the tradition of Llewellyn Davies and of F. D. Maurice continues in the lives of the Cambridge women who are within the Co-operative circle. During the early years of the Co-operative Society they were mainly concerned with the family welfare. They had little time for the exchange of views with one another. But, as the Society advanced they were encouraged to get together for mutual improvement. They had co-operated in wage-spending just as their husbands had joined trade unions to secure their

* Miss Clough was among those who knew the Rochdale Co-operators in the early days of University Extension.



Mr. H. A. BURTON



Mr. A. CROSS

(See facing page 16)



Co-operation serves the Fenlands



DEPARTMENTAL MANAGERS

Standing : Messrs. W. Gwillam (Bakery), J. A. Cornwell (Outfitting & Tailoring),
J. C. Lucy (Butchery), H. Pridmore (Funeral Furnishing)

Sitting : J. Holliday (Dairy), D. Staines (Grocery), R. Wisher (Boot & Shoe),
W. R. P. Stiles (Furnishing), J. Keyworth (Drapery)

wage-earning security. But until Mrs. (later Lady) A. H. D. Acland asked why the work of the women in the Co-operative Movement was limited to the spending of money and "why should not we have our meetings, our readings, our discussions?" no organised endeavour was made to link the women customers in educational unity. Mrs. Lawrenson—then at Woolwich—responded to the appeal and, together, they launched the Women's Co-operative Guild in 1883.

At that time, the Rev. J. Llewellyn Davies was rector of Christ Church, Marylebone. There was a little Co-operative Society with a little branch of the Women's Co-operative Guild. Into the work of the latter his daughter, Miss Margaret Llewellyn Davies entered with the family enthusiasm for good causes. That attachment to a minor sprig of Co-operation was the beginning of her 32 years of national leadership of the Guild. She was elected to the central committee in 1888, and in the following year became the Hon. General Secretary. Concomitantly with her entry into the wider Co-operative circle, her father became rector of Kirkby Lonsdale and the rectory became the headquarters of the Women's Co-operative Guild, where Miss M. Llewellyn Davies implemented the desire of her father's friend, F. D. Maurice, that "the education of working men would lead us by the most direct road to the education of working women. I am sure," wrote the Prophet of Christian Socialism, "that the earnest thoughtful man, who is also a labourer with his hands, instead of grudging his wife the best culture she can

obtain, will demand that she should have it. He will long to have a true household ; he will desire to bring up brave citizens."

Now the women members of Co-operative Societies are primarily concerned with the nutritive care and arrangement of their households. They have to organise the family affairs on slender incomes. Hence the development of the Women's Co-operative Guild was bashfully slow. Not till 1902 did it blossom in Cambridge. The 19th century closed with a "peak year for wages,"* and improving trade. But there was slackening employment in the few industries in Cambridge, and the prospects were dreary. It was in such an atmosphere that Mrs. C. D. Rackham gave fresh hope to the women whom she assembled on 2nd May of that year to establish the Guild which now has many branches in the Cambridge circle of Co-operation.

Much water had flowed between the banks of the Cam in the years that separated 1902, when the women guilded and 1868, when the men co-operated. The Cambridge Society began in the trade depression that followed the Civil War in America—a depression deepened by the bad harvest in the eastern counties in 1867. The wages of the highly skilled workers of the University town were about £50 a year ; those of the less skilled, £33 10s., and the unskilled found themselves on a very lowly plane at £24 10s. True, prices were lower than now ; but the margin between income

* See the last volume of *The Economic History of Modern Britain*, by Professor J. H. Clapham, the Professor of Economic History at Cambridge University, published in 1938.

and expenditure was too slight to allow the wives opportunity for relaxation from domestic budgeting. John Stuart Mill sounded a new note in the House of Commons in 1869, when he suggested that women had rights of citizenship as well as duties at home. It is significant that Girton and Newnham evolved about that time; and the Cambridge Society started its economic path to the recognition of women as comrades in the social affairs of the world. They welcomed the inspiration given them by Mrs. Rackham, when she suggested their coming into a Guild.

She brought them together in Cambridge in a Co-operative sisterhood of mutual service. And for 21 years she devoted herself to the work while serving the community as a Poor Law Guardian, Town Councillor and a member of the County Council. Thus she was able to prove the capacity of women for the exercise of the vote denied by the Commons in 1869—though freely accorded by the Co-operative Societies. Mrs. Rackham—as told by Mrs. Barnett in her volume on the work of Canon Barnett of Toynbee Hall—had been the hostess of visiting groups of London women seeking contact with higher education; and she gave to her Cambridge Co-operative friends similar glimpses of the opportunities for learning while homing. And now the Guildswomen are following, with interest, her Parliamentary candidature in the Saffron Walden Division and reading, with advantage, her new book on the Factory Acts.

There was a fine response to the formation of the Women's Guild in Cambridge. It quickly got

to work in enthusing the women members of the Society in the ideals of the movement. Campaigns for the development of plans for maternal and child welfare were carried forward to success and representation on the Child Welfare Committee of the town has proved its concern for the future citizens. The Guild has done well in keeping the question of Milk for School Children and kindred subjects of social welfare to the fore; and in carrying high its hope of Peace in our time—and beyond.

The Guild has proved the training ground for women in administrative work. Mrs. Gray, an original member of the Cambridge branch and first District Secretary in the fenlands, served on the educational committee of the Society before her election, 23 years ago, on the Board of Management. Mrs. Foister whose retirement from that board, after four years of good service, was marked with the regard of all the members, joined the Guild in 1903, and after filling many offices, succeeded Mrs. Rackham as president in 1923, continuing in office till election to the Management Committee in 1934. She gave nearly 20 years of zealous service to the education committee and served the community on the old Board of Guardians and was on the Borough Council for a decade.

Continuity of policy in upholding the Co-operative principle has been ensured by the whole-hearted and long-time service of its officers. The present president, Mrs. Abraham, followed Mrs. Foister in 1934. Previously she had been

the secretary for ten years and had served even longer on the committee. In 1928, she became District Secretary for the Guilds and about the same time was elected to the education committee, where she is still doing useful service. Mrs. Crown, who has been secretary for four years, after a similar term as assistant, maintains the loyal tradition of her predecessors. The treasurer, Mrs. Summerlin, has kept the financial security since 1934, and, in addition, is the active secretary of the Co-operative Party. Thus the Co-operators co-operate.

One of the outstanding events of Guild history was the holding of the Annual Congress at Cambridge in 1925, when the local branch welcomed the delegates to the Guildhall. The Congress discussed many things—outstanding topics of importance being a National Milk Supply, family allowances and pensions. It was at that Guild Congress that Mrs. E. Barton, J.P., was elected to the secretaryship in which office Miss M. Llewellyn Davies had given the women their place in the movement. Curiously enough, women had been similarly proving their capacity in the social welfare of Cambridge. Mrs. Bateson was elected to the Cambridge Board of Guardians in 1884. But the forward movement really began in 1904—following the formation of the Women's Co-operative Guild. In that year Mrs. Rackham was elected a Guardian. When Boards of Guardians were abolished in 1929, 15 of the 47 in Cambridge were women. And among the J.P.s were Mrs. E. B. Baker, Mrs. J. M. Keynes and Mrs. C. D. Rackham—a trio of worthy women.

In England in 1920, Cambridge had the largest proportion of women J.P.s. Much had happened in the lifetime of the Cambridge Society.

There is versatility and vitality in the guild of Great Wilbraham, over which Mrs. E. M. Wilson presides and of which Mrs. A. M. Cheason is the secretary. It commenced early in 1930, owing to the enthusiasm of the Guildswomen in Cambridge seeking to help the development of social energy in the rural areas of the Society. A score of women responded; now they have doubled in numbers and increased in hopeful service. In 1935, the Guild opened its meetings to men and now has 16 husbands as hon. members. Nor are the children forgotten by this useful village social centre.

Sawbridgeworth and Burwell Guilds have each a membership of 50 loyal Co-operators following the Co-operative way of the branches outlined in this chapter. Of the former, Mrs. Gunn is the president and Mrs. Hurren, the secretary. The Burwell Guild is led by Mrs. Pettit with Mrs. K. Baker as the secretary. They are all seeking the welfare of the Society while interesting their own people in matters of womanly concern.

The Chesterton branch of the Guild began in April, 1921, led by the late Mrs. Dyson and by Mrs. Oakman. There are half-a-dozen of the founders in the present membership of 40 with Mrs. Nelson of the educational committee as the zealous president and Mrs. E. G. Allensby as secretary. The Guild has proved its concern for

peace abroad and goodwill at home. Local ministers have addressed its meetings and the placing of a chaplet of White Poppies on the War Memorial in Chesterton churchyard on Armistice Day annually signifies the hope that the tranquillity of our countryside will never be disturbed by War's alarms.

Romsey Town Guild beginning in 1927, has a membership of 60, with Mrs. Harradine as president and Mrs. Thirkettle as the secretary; another Guild, similarly zealous, is that of Histon. Over its 35 members, Mrs. Pettit presides with Mrs. Knott in the secretarial office. Both branches are inspired with the Co-operative ideal that the members practise.

Three years before the War wrought its havoc, the Rock Estate branch came into the Co-operative life of the town. During 1914-18 it was active in work for the men at the Front; its weekly meetings were organised for sewing and knitting—there was more thought than talk. This urge for practical service has been as firm as the rock in the name of the branch. Homely comforts have been provided for the women of Spain during the agony of the Civil War; these Guildswomen have been equally helpful to the Spanish households as they were to our own men during the Great Stress. In 1920, when statesmen were in the entanglement of the Armistice, the president of the Guild and the zealous secretary (Mrs. Pateman) served on the local committee of the Women's Peacemakers' Pilgrimage and the members joined in the great demonstration that expressed the hopes of Cambridge women for the sanity of the world.

These ladies of the Rock Estate have been watchful of the development of the Society's operations in their area ; and have also been active in promoting the social amenities of the place. They took part in the agitation for a children's recreation ground ; and rejoiced when it was located in Coleridge Road. The 35 members are happy in the presidency of Mrs. Brown with Mrs. E. M. Gray as their secretary.

There is a thoroughly vigorous pursuit of Peace in the Bishops Stortford branch of the Guild whose 50 members have helped in house-to-house collections for the Basque children and are affiliated to the Peace Council. They are creating increased loyalty to the Society which has preserved the pioneer work of past years in the pleasant town of Cecil Rhodes. In addition to discussions, the Bishops Stortford Guild appreciates the dramatic art and its performance of a Peace play proved a realistic bit of healthy propaganda. Its president is Mrs. E. M. Smith, J.P. and Mrs. F. Snow* the secretary.

Royston's useful Women's Guild is enjoying a second life. Originally began in 1923, it closed down after three years. Then it was revived by Mrs. Foister in 1929 and now, with 80 members, is recognised as a useful factor in the social life of the little town with Mrs. E. M. Hales as president and Mrs. E. A. King as secretary. When the new hospital was opened the Guild organised a bazaar in conjunction with other local bodies and proved

* The death of Mrs. Snow while this History was in progress evoked the sympathy of all the Guildswomen for those who had lost a friend.

its interest in the welfare of neighbours. It has observed the development of local government. County and district councillors have informed its meetings—and one of its members has faced the electors in a District Council contest. Interest in the supply of milk to children in the schools has led to improvement in that respect. For two years the Guild has been responsible for a Junior Circle that serves a good Co-operative purpose. Its activities range from the discussional meeting to participation in the Coronation Procession when its members arranged themselves in a Tea Gardens tableau and the children of Co-operators won the first prize in the town for their display.

Since 1923, the Dunmow branch of the Guild has done service for the Society and the community in a persuasive way enlisting the help of the women in castle and cottage. With 30 earnest members it has become a factor in the formation of local public opinion to which the work of Mrs. Finch, the president, and Mrs. Amos, the secretary, makes helpful contribution. One of its members is on the committee of the local Housing Association, and another is on the Child Welfare Clinic. In the early years it was entertained at Easton Lodge by the late Countess of Warwick, whose hearty help was always appreciated.

Beneath all the collective activities has been a stream of personal friendship. Some of the branches make a point of members visiting those who are sick; others maintain a record of good attendance by watching the register so that absence may lead to personal calls—and so maintain the

spirit of neighbourliness. The Guilds have responded to appeals for help in local and international affairs. The women and children victims of the Spanish Civil War have been nurtured by the branches of the Women's Guild in and near Cambridge. Gifts of clothing and the liberal purchase of "milk tokens for Spain" have testified to their practical interest and special efforts for hospitality to the Basque children have had good support.

Educationally the Guilds have had the help of many of the county and borough officials in obtaining first-hand knowledge of the communal services available in the collective interest. The Chief Constable, the Medical Officer of Health, the Probation Officer, and others engaged in civic or communal service, addressed one or more of the branches on their particular phase of local life; ministers and the clergy have spoken of ideals and the departmental managers have helped them to a knowledge of practical business; nurses and social visitors have explained some household ailments and worries; and several of the Mayors, including the first lady mayor, Mrs. Hartree and Mrs. J. M. Keynes, have given encouragement.

All the branches of the Women's Guild have given devoted service to the cause of Peace. They have made known to the M.P.s representing their constituencies that Co-operators believe in international amity.

And the enthusiasm for goodwill rises as the years go by.

CHAPTER IX

THE CO-OPERATIVE CIVIL SERVICE



HERE is a Co-operative Civil Service in Cambridge that serves the members with their daily requirements and preserves their resources with fidelity in business and faith in the Co-operative principle. They enjoy their association with the Society whose members have given distinction to the shopping conditions of the town and who have set a standard of remuneration in the services. There are 700 employees. Those entering the service since 1924 are members of the trade union concerned with their particular calling and they link their unionised labour in mutual understanding. Thus they ensure economy and secure efficiency in the Co-operative service.

Many of those in the offices, shops and works have earnestly studied Co-operation in association with their technical training. Diplomas from the Co-operative Union testify that a large number of the employees are practitioners of the principles advanced by scholars and observers at the Colleges. They, too, know social as well as political economy—encouraged by the helpful attitude of the Management and Educational Committees of the Society. The work of the latter has been admirably fostered by the succession of employees who have been elected to the committee.

And they look to the future hopefully. Promotion comes by merit, ability and interest in the work. As the years advance the prospect of participation in the Society's Pension Scheme

removes the worries of increasing age ; and thus the young people are encouraged in the succession of satisfied workers.

The 48-hour week that the members sustain by the domestic organisation of their shopping habits leaves leisure for pastime and pleasure. The Employees' Club and Institute, founded in 1935, is housed in the Society's own property near the centre in Burleigh Street. It has a membership of well over 200 and in addition to the social amenities of a club maintains the educational facilities of an Institute—with its own Library, vocational and cultural instruction. The Employees' Social Club is the mainspring for the organisation of outdoor sports.

With the hearty co-operation of some of the Colleges it enters into the stream of popular interest on the Cam. On the river the employees have their Rowing Club which, under the guidance of famous Blues, has attained town distinction. Since 1934, the Beehive Annual Regatta has been the event of the season. Taking part in the Cambridge Town Rowing Association's Regatta the Club has done well. It did well in winning the Pamplin Cup in the eight-oared time race and by reaching the top of the river with five successive bumps. Under the captaincy of Mr. A. J. Frost with Mr. J. Grocock as secretary, the Beehive Club gives Co-operation a honoured place on the Cam.

The employees prove the team spirit on land and river. Their cricket and football clubs have entered with spirit into East Anglian competitions

and with tennis, swimming, and other sports in active play the Beehives win their games when the sun shines.

Educational and social activities are equally as keenly encouraged. The Library is greatly in use and in the conversation room are darts that reach the calculated resting places and tables that respond to the agility of the rivals of tennis—on tables and lawns.


* * * *

The celebration of the Society's 70th Anniversary was made memorable by an Exhibition of Co-operative Productions on Midsummer Common in July, 1938. The Mayor of Cambridge attended and testified to the value of Co-operation as a principle in industry. More than 50,000 visitors proved the interest aroused by the event and 647 new members were enrolled in the Cambridge and District Co-operative Society.

While thus growing in strength and security, the Society recognises the responsibilities of those with great possessions to local charitable and helpful causes. Its donations to hospitals, nursing associations, convalescent homes, and similar good works ; its assistance to institutions for the welfare of children and the disabled ; and its interest in societies for the preservation of the amenities of life indicate that there is a soul in the Co-operative body. For Co-operation is more than Business—it makes for Brotherhood.

CHAPTER X

CO-OPERATIVE BEGINNINGS IN A UNIVERSITY TOWN

N his Hulsean sermon to the University of Cambridge in 1890, the Rev. J. Llewellyn Davies (father of Miss Margaret Llewellyn Davies, who led the Women's Co-operative Guild into the national arena) voiced the view that "in very early times it became evident that a living being might obtain more pleasure by co-operating with other living beings than by standing alone." "Thus," he added, "society began." And now the Co-operative Society continues to have regard for the human relationships amid an entangling world of Individualism that seeks more than its own and profits from the necessities of the many. The mutual welfare of all the people is the aim of those who seek the pleasure and the beneficence found by "co-operating with other living beings." Service is the mainspring of well-being and well-doing.

Something of this altruistic hope was expressed in the Charter which King John gave to Cambridge in 1207. That encouraged the formation of the Merchants' Guild to observe the equitable relation of buyer and seller, of producer and consumer. It was in the mind of Hugh of Balsham when, in founding Peterhouse 70 years later, he made the first provision for scholars to be housed together, thus obtaining "more pleasure by co-operating" than by living in isolation or "standing alone."

The ideal of Co-operation courses through our social history. More's Utopia; Harrington's Oceana; Bacon's New Atlantis; Beller's College of Industry; the Pantisocracy of Coleridge and Southey; Robert Owen's New Order of Society; the Co-operative store of the Rochdale Pioneers (and that of the Cambridge Society opened 24 years later); Ebenezer Howard's Garden City at Letchworth; and the institution of fraternal relations among the colleges in the Universities manifest the steadfast sanity of the Co-operative principle in contributing to the moral, mental and material improvement of the race.

There is a community of culture and a society of Co-operators on the banks of the Cam. Each has its own special work to do; but both are steering to the same end—the advancement of human welfare through the unity of understanding and harmony in the daily task. That was in the mind of the cobblers, labourers and wage-earners who, in 1868, instituted the Cambridge Co-operative Society to secure the domestic welfare of the households within a radius of 15 miles from the Guildhall. They proved the profit, as well as the pleasure of “co-operating with other living beings” so thoroughly that they, later, widened their boundaries to the borders of Essex and Hertfordshire, and became the Cambridge and District Co-operative Society Limited that has realised the intention of the Merchants' Guild of the 13th century by uniting people, mostly heads of families in a common interest.

The University has similarly proved the value of associative effort. For the poor students gathered on the banks of the Cam in the 12th century were rescued from exploitation by the people with whom they lodged by the Co-operative dwelling-place established by Hugh of Balsham. They were enabled to share their mutual interest away from the conflicting environment which had weakened their resources and driven them to despair. The hostel—to use the modern term—became known as Peterhouse. This, the oldest college in Cambridge, has maintained the Co-operative tradition. It gave inspiration to the societies of the Owenite period.

Material well-being was ensured the students by Co-operation in the earliest times. And the wider distribution of knowledge was encouraged in the 19th century (soon after the townspeople introduced the Co-operative principle into the distribution of their material wants) by the changes in the governance of the University which transformed it from a federation of colleges to a more co-operative body. Each of the 17 colleges on the banks of the Cam was, during Leslie Stephen's time at the University, an independent corporation, standing alone. "It followed that the colleges were not co-operative so much as competitive bodies."* The changes in 1870; and University Extension which was generated in the meeting-place of the Rochdale Pioneers in 1872, introduced into the University the collective interests of the Colleges and widened the educational outlook beyond

* "Some Early Impressions" by Sir Leslie Stephen.



Peterhouse The Oldest Foundation in the University



Dr. WILLIAM KING
(Fellow of Peterhouse 1812-1843)



At St. John's College

Cambridge, Oxford and London. Like the Cambridge Co-operative Society the Senate extended its boundaries beyond the county.

Co-operation has thus penetrated town and gown during the last 70 years. The family welfare of the residents has advanced through the application of the same principle that had restored the colleges to their original purpose of promoting education—a purpose which, according to Leslie Stephen, had been inverted to the theory that “education was useful to promote the welfare of the colleges.” When the colleges were founded there were Guilds and Assizes that sought equity between merchants and their customers—distribution promoted consumption. But by the middle of the last century consumption was being conditioned by the profits demanded by the distributors. The reforming spirit that was developing the association of colleges in the distribution of knowledge entered into the minds of the people of the town; for the pioneers of the Cambridge Co-operative Society declared that:—

“The object of this Society is to raise a fund, by voluntary subscriptions of the members, for the better enabling them to purchase food, firing, clothing and other necessities, by carrying on, in common, the trade or business of general dealers, both wholesale and retail.”

This met the primal needs of the wage-earners and showed that the Co-operators of Cambridge had a just notion of the facts of political economy and history which might be usefully studied in the University while they were being practised by the

men and women living in the town. For eight years before, the Rev. Charles Kingsley, M.A., in his inaugural lecture to the undergraduates, as Professor of Modern History in the University of Cambridge, had declared that :—

“The first fact of history is, *Bouche va toujours* ; whatever men have or have not done, they have always eaten, or tried to eat ; and the laws which regulate the supply of the first necessities of life are, after all, the first which should be learnt, and the last which should be ignored.”

That essential fact must determine the truth of all economic theories. Though the original Rochdale Pioneers contemplated the housing of their members ; their employment in fields and factories ; and “as soon as practicable,” the arrangement of the “powers of production, distribution, education and government, or in other words to establish a self-supporting home colony of united interests,” they realised that “the establishment of a store for the sale of provisions and clothing, etc.,”* was the first lesson to be learnt. So did the Cambridge pioneers of 1868.

Such simple beginnings in the economic field were full of national significance. For they prepared the way for the eight million Co-operators who now trade amongst themselves to the extent of £250,000,000 a year from their 24,000 shops ; and who have found employment for 350,000 under conditions that set the standard for the distributive

* From the plans of the Rochdale Pioneers of 1844.

trade. To have accumulated a capital of £280,000,000 and be able to share a surplus of £28,000,000 annually among the members is an achievement that is worth study in the colleges and co-operation in the homes of the people. The pioneers began simply and sincerely. As Prof. J. H. Clapham, Litt.D., Vice-Provost of King's College and Professor of Economic History in the University of Cambridge, has observed :—

“ Whatever their dreams and their programme looked forward both to manufacturing and agriculture on Co-operative lines, they contented themselves in their early years of struggle with the supply to one another of genuine foodstuffs, the enforcement of cash payment and the ‘ Rochdale system ’ of dividing the profit on sales in proportion to the amount of purchases By 1851, there were something like 130 societies with an aggregate membership which can hardly have been more than 15,000. . . . The Co-operators were still a feeble folk ; but if creative faith, combined with sober, peaceable good sense, ranks before the power to fight, in a cause however just, and before the rather obvious, if admirable quest for good fellowship, a little help in sickness or old age and decent burial ; then these scattered democratic stores, with simple routine and high hopes, may perhaps stand first among the self-made social institutions of British wage-earners in the bleak towns of the ‘ 40’s. ’ ”*

The Movement thus inaugurated in the “ Hungry Forties,” spread throughout the country radiating a new economic warmth in the comfortless corners of the land. By 1866, Co-operative Societies were operating in every English county excepting Cambridge, Huntingdon, Rutland and


* Volume I. of *An Economic History of Modern Britain*, by J. H. Clapham, Litt. D., F.B.A.

Herefordshire. The agricultural areas proved more stony grounds than the industrial centres for the cultivation of the seed of Co-operation. When the villagers of Sawston formed a Co-operative Society in 1867 they encountered fierce opposition in the erection of their store. At the commencement of the building, opponents pulled down at night the bricks that were laid during the day; and the members of the new society took turns as night watchmen to protect their rising property. Cambridgeshire did not give cordial welcome to Co-operation. Now Cambridge recognises Co-operation as an essential fact in the county welfare. From the establishment of the Society in the town in 1868 Co-operation has taken its place as a social service for all who seek neighbourly goodwill. It had learned its lesson by the end of the century. A comparison of the population and the co-operators in the county at the Census of 1901 shows that the latter were 2.6 per cent. of the former; it increased to 4.6 per cent. in 1911; to 7.5 per cent. in 1921. In the next decade the advance was more pronounced for the Co-operators were 12.7 per cent. of the population. The progress since the 1931 Census has been so notable that by the next time the people are counted 25 per cent. of the inhabitants of Cambridge and the fenlands will be within the Co-operative circle. The "feeble folk" of the 1840's will be a dominant force in the 1940's.

In the Co-operative enumeration most of the members represent a family, so that the 25 per cent. will account for much more than half the population of the county of Cambridge.

CHAPTER XI

PETERHOUSE—THE COLLEGE OF THE PIONEER CO-OPERATOR

ETERHOUSE has great distinction in the annals of Co-operation. It was the first of the Cambridge colleges to gather its students into homely relationship forming a Co-operative community in which material well-being was unisoned with scholarly well-doing. That was as long ago as the 12th century. Then, in the 19th century a Fellow of Peterhouse proved the most lucid and convincing advocate of Co-operation before the idea was realised in shops and stores, or in fields and factories. The writings of Dr. William King (Fellow of Peterhouse, 1812-1843) were studied by the Rochdale Pioneers before they planned their venture of 1844. Between those centuries a poet of Peterhouse gave poetical expression to the idea of harmony in human relationships—now so often forecast as the Co-operative Commonwealth.

Richard Crashaw, the 17th century poet, is a receding influence. Only students of poetry and Doctors of Divinity now read Crashaw and follow his *Steps to the Temple*. He matriculated at Pembroke College and then crossed the road to Peterhouse in 1636. There he stayed seven years. During the upheaval of the Civil War he, with other Fellows, left Cambridge. Browsing among his poems recently, I came across the word "co-operates"—a word that rarely occurs in verse, though common enough in prose and conversation.

In the hymn, *To the Name above every Name*, the poet appeals to the ministers of "sweet sad mirth" to "bring all your household—stuff of Heaven on earth" and calls upon all the voices of Nature and Art to:—

"Bring all the powers of praise,
Your provinces of well-united worlds can raise;
Bring all your lutes and harps of Heaven and Earth;
Whate'er *co-operates* to the common mirth."

That was written about 1650. Nearly two and a-half centuries later the Rev. J. Llewellyn Davies (a former Fellow of Trinity College) declared that "we might obtain more pleasure by *co-operating* with other living beings than by standing alone." The poetry of Richard Crashaw and the prose of Llewellyn Davies are being practised by the people of the town in which they proclaimed the pleasure and—we moderns add—the profit, of co-operation with others.

Dr. King was born at Ipswich in 1786, and from the local Grammar School went to that at Westminster on his way to Peterhouse in 1809. He was elected a Fellow in 1812 and, later, when he settled at Brighton, was proud to sign himself William King, M.D. (Cantab). He became associated with many of the benevolent societies seeking the easement of the harassed families in the town which had flourished under the Regency revels and was sorely stricken when the satellites of Royalty fled with their patron. Some working men connected with the Mechanics' Institute co-operated

to open a shop, the profits of which were to be used to form a community on the Owenite plan. Dr. King attended some of their meetings and urged them to devote their surplus for the welfare of their families—thus linking the communal idea with that of immediate self-help. Lady Byron* was solacing her widowhood with good works and gave financial assistance to the societies that were formed on the Sussex coast. She encouraged Dr. King to edit a little monthly tract or journal, *The Co-operator* † which, from 1828–1830, was a powerful stimulant to the formation of co-operative societies throughout the country. King published his trilogy of thought in every issue as follows:—

“ Knowledge and union are power :
Power, directed by knowledge is happiness :
Happiness is the end of Creation.”

This was in accord with the poetical view of Crashaw of Peterhouse, and an anticipation of the prose of Llewellyn Davies of Trinity. It was also in keeping with the whole trend of Co-operative thought. In the last year of *The Co-operator*, when John Finch (who became the Governor of Owen's ill-assorted community of Harmony Hall) was assisting the formation of the First Liverpool Co-operative Society he wrote to William Pare of Birmingham (described by G. J. Holyoake as the

* An account of Lady Byron's interest in Co-operation; and a biography of Dr. William King will be found complete in *Brighton's Co-operative Advance*, 1828–1938, published by the Co-operative Union.

† *The Co-operator* was also the name of Henry Pitman's journal published in the 1860's, which led to the start of the Cambridge Society.

first "Co-operative missionary") to the effect that they hoped to realise as much profit as:—

"would establish a school or college that would in a few years be sufficient, with the labour of the children three or four hours a day, to pay for the board, lodging and a superior education of some hundreds of the children of Co-operators."

Here we have the first mention of a Co-operative College—suggested, possibly, by the educational aims of the Brighton Co-operators who sought to give opportunities for some of their children to attend schools from which they were individually debarred by the poverty of their parents. Certainly the desire for the education that was the source of Knowledge and Power leading to Happiness was in the minds of the pioneer Co-operators. Nearly a century later, in 1924, the Co-operative College was set up in Manchester—Cambridge Co-operative Society making a generous contribution to its foundation. Modern Co-operators, having entered into the elementary stage through the Educational Act of 1870 and its subsequent expansion have developed its curriculum to meet the vocational and cultural needs of their Movements.

This long-sustained interest of Co-operative Societies in educational endeavours was endorsed by Prof. R. H. Tawney in a letter* to Mrs. S. A. Barnett, written in a testimony to the work of her

* Published in *Canon Barnett : His Life, Work and Friends*, by his wife.

husband in connection with the establishment of Toynbee Hall :—


“Something of the same idea,” he wrote, “had been part of the creed of the fathers of Co-operation ; and indeed, as William Lovett’s memoirs show, of an earlier and more sorely stricken generation. Under their influence, F. D. Maurice had founded the Working Men’s College, almost the sole survivor of a crop of similar experiments, in the middle of the 19th century ; and the University Extension Movement, in the first flush of its enthusiasm, had drawn large audiences of working people in the North of England.”

Throughout the long history of the Co-operative Movement the educational streak is continuous. The widening of the avenues for general knowledge have lessened the number of by-paths by which the societies sought the education of their people. But they pioneered the class-work of evening classes and opened newsrooms and libraries which have become recognised features of civic service. The association of Maurice and his friends with the Co-operative foundation and the experimental efforts of University Extension in Co-operative lecture-halls will be sketched in the succeeding chapter.



CHAPTER XII

THE CHRISTIAN SOCIALISTS

OBERT OWEN'S championship of the industrious classes, and his plans for reforming the selfish order of society into communal association incited collegians to controversy and excited workingmen to hopes that flickered—for a generation. Dr. A. S. Wade, D.D., the rector of Warwick, who had been educated at St. John's College, Cambridge, presided at the Grand Meeting of the Working Classes convened by Owen in March, 1834, to protest against the vicious sentences on the Tolpuddle (Dorset) labourers. When, a month later, 50,000 people demonstrated at Copenhagen Fields, Dr. Wade, his bulky form weighing 20 stone, arrayed in his robes of Doctor of Divinity, led the procession with Robert Owen to Whitehall. But neither Dr. Wade nor Owen carried weight with the authorities. On the other side the people—without any citizen rights and with scant education—were tutored in opposition by University dons. For on 17th November, 1839, the Rev. George Pearson (late Fellow of St. John's), the rector of Castle Camps and the Christian Advocate in the University of Cambridge, preached a sermon before the undergraduates in which he declared the Owenite principle involved the "subversion of the whole frame of civilised society," and warned his hearers against such apostasy. He need not have worried himself or

the collegians for Owen's ready-made community of Harmony Hall* crashed in 1845, and the building, renamed as Queenwood College, became a famous school in the first half of the Victorian Era.

Into that troubled time of opposing forces and conflicting views came the moulding mind of F. D. Maurice. He was a native of the eastern counties. Born near Lowestoft in 1805, he went to Cambridge, where he radiated a remarkable influence. Arthur Hallam, to whom Tennyson dedicated "In Memoriam," has left on record his belief that "the effect which Maurice has produced at Cambridge by the single creation of the society of the Apostles is far greater than I can dare to calculate and will be felt, both directly and indirectly, in the age that is upon us." Never was prophecy so promptly fulfilled.

Maurice went to London as Chaplain of Lincoln's Inn in 1836, and heard the rumbling echoes of the Owenite Trade Unionism. Then began his work of keeping the social and political ideals of the people in line with his all-embracing religion. This doctrine, as C. W. Stubbs, D.D.† observed was "idealised and transfigured in the two great poets of the century, Tennyson and Browning, dominant in the teaching of the Cambridge Schools of Lightfoot and Westcott and Hort," and turned

* Harmony Hall was located at Tytherley in Hampshire. When transformed into Queenwood College, Henry Fawcett was one of the scholars. He went to Trinity Hall, and when the Senate established the Professorship of Political Economy in 1863 was the first to hold the office—till 1884, when he was succeeded by Alfred Marshall (St. John's), who was followed in 1908 by Professor A. C. Pigou, M.A. Professor Pigou in his work on *Wealth and Welfare*, commends Mr. C. R. Fay's *Co-operation at Home and Abroad*, for a full discussion of Co-operative activity.

† Dean of Ely and later, Bishop of Truro.

the current of our English Christianity to the consideration of the social problems of the age. While Maurice was arresting the attention of the barristers at Lincoln's Inn, Charles Kingsley went up to Magdalene College. These two dissimilar personalities came together a few years later in the Christian Socialist Movement that sought the creation of a Social Order based upon a less materialist and sandy foundation than the Grand New World of Robert Owen. Maurice was its prophet and Kingsley the knight-errant, attacking the fresh evils of competitive society in the spirit of chivalry and daring—for the brotherhood of men. They both became Professors at their University—Maurice of Moral Philosophy (1866–1872), and Kingsley of Modern History (1860–1866).*

Charles Kingsley was full of adventure at Cambridge—in keeping with his hero in *Westward Ho* and his *Alton Locke* in attacking the sweating system. Sometimes he would climb over the walls of his college at 2 a.m. for fishing at Duxford in the morning. Dr. Bateson, Master of St. John's (who was his private classical tutor), observed that Kingsley "made but an indifferent use of the opportunities which his residence in Cambridge afforded him." He thorough'y enjoyed sport of all kinds and helped the Magdalene boat to be high on the river. While he escaped University distinction, his studies were useful—as he wrote to an Oxford friend—"so far as they strengthen

* See "Charles Kingsley and Parson Lot" by W. Henry Brown; published by the Co-operative Union.

your mind to learn, judge and systematise for itself after you leave college." Happily he settled down to read the works of Carlyle who was thunderbolting the complacency of the age and catch the spirit of Coleridge's *Aids to Reflection*. And then, in 1842, he left Cambridge for Eversley, in Hampshire, the rectory of which was his home for 33 years.

Chartism was marching to its collapse on Kennington Common, when, on the morning of 10th April, 1848, Charles Kingsley rushed from Eversley to discuss with Maurice the meaning of the turmoil. He was introduced to J. M. Ludlow. They sat up—as Kingsley wrote to his wife the following day—"till 4 this morning, writing, posting placards under Maurice's auspices." The result was the issue of the manifesto to the "Workmen of England" by "A Working Parson," exposing the "shameful filth and darkness in which you are forced to live crowded together," and testifying to "the noble patience and self-control with which you have as yet borne these evils." It beseeched them to "turn back from the precipice of riot, which ends in the gulf of universal distrust, stagnation, starvation," and declared that "The Charter is not bad—if the men who use it are not bad! But will the Charter make you free?" And then, hopefully, Kingsley urged that something more than Acts of Parliament was necessary for the nobler day of "freedom, science, industry," and concluded: "Workers of England, be wise, and then you *must* be free, for you will be *fit* to be free."

This was followed by gatherings of kindred spirits at Maurice's home in Queen Square, London, to consider how they could fit the working men for association towards that nobler day. At one of those meetings Kingsley was in a minority of one in a matter on which a vote was taken. He jokingly remarked that he felt much as Lot must have felt in the Cities of the Plain. The name, "Parson Lot" was henceforward his *nom de plume* for his writings in *Politics for the People*, No. 1 of which appeared on 6th May, 1848. It ran weekly till the Autumn proclaiming that:—

"Politics have been separated from household ties and affections—from art, and science, and literature When they become Politics for the People they are found to take in a very large field; whatever concerns man as a social being must be included in them."

Co-operation and Education were regarded as the solvents for many of the industrial and social ills.

E. V. Neale and J. M. Ludlow secured the witness of J. S. Mill to the value of Co-operative Societies before the Select Committee of the House of Commons, whose report eventuated in the Industrial and Provident Societies' Act of 1852—hailed by Tom Hughes as the Magna Charta of Co-operation. Thus the way was led to the first Co-operative Congress of 1869.

While the Christian Socialists* were engaged in

* *Christian Socialism*, 1848-1854, by Canon C. E. Raven, the Regius Doctor of Divinity at Cambridge, is the most authoritative and sympathetic history of the Movement which stimulated social efforts towards constructive co-operation.

securing the statutory recognition of Co-operation, they were also concerned with the betterment of the lives of the people immediately near Lincoln's Inn. They opened a house in Little Ormond Yard for friendly intercourse with their neighbours and for the spread of knowledge. On 21st September, 1848, the school was opened. The Rev. Joseph Clark (Fellow of Christ's Church, Cambridge) conducted a dedicatory service attended by most of the group including Dr. F. J. Furnivall* (Trinity Hall) who continued his loyal support to the movement though he drifted into Republican theories which, happily, were overwhelmed by his wanderings into the Early English Text, and his enthusiastic coaching of working girls to scull on the Thames. That simple effort proved the foundation of the Working Men's College in Great Ormond Street in 1854, with F. D. Maurice as Principal and many Cambridge men on the Council or helping as teachers. Among them were two Scots who had become known to the undergraduates who frequented their bookshop—Daniel and Alexander Macmillan. Their names bring us back to Cambridge; but the Working Men's College continues its liberal education to the artisans of London—in the building erected for its expanding purpose in Crowndale Road, St. Pancras, in 1906.

*F. J. Furnivall was also, with T. Hughes and E. V. Neale, the treasurer of the Society for Promoting Working Men's Associations (of which F. D. Maurice was the president) which in 1852, set afoot self-governing Co-operative workshops.

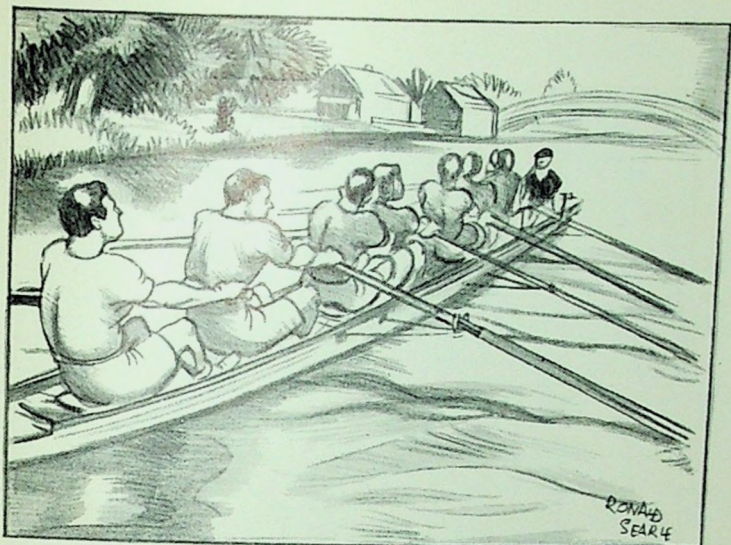
CHAPTER XIII

CAMBRIDGE WORKING MEN'S COLLEGE



HE Working Men's College was founded in London in 1854. Alexander Macmillan talked to some of the townspeople of Cambridge on the useful influence that could be effected by starting a Cambridge Working Men's College; and at a meeting on 26th March, 1855, mentioned that he had conferred with several working men who "are anxious to secure education of a different kind from that given in Mechanics' Institutes." In London, he familiarised himself with the methods of the new College and, returning to Cambridge was, with F. Gerald Vesey, appointed as joint hon. secretary of the local educational venture. Meetings of the Council were held monthly and his regular attendance to the end of 1859 proved his interest in this effort to bring University teachers and working-men students together—an anticipation of the University Extension Movement initiated by Professor Stuart. During the Summer he held many meetings among the working people of the town and secured promises of support from 120 prospective members. Nor did he forget the women for he sought to be of service to the housewives and regarded it as of immense importance "to make mothers in the poorer classes familiar with the laws of health so far as they affect their families in cleanliness, proper food and the like."

Certainly he supplied the driving power and gathered a galaxy of scholars to distribute their



The "Beehives" on the River



A Cosy Corner in the Social Club



The Histon Branch of the Cambridge Society

knowledge to the townspeople. Among them were John Seeley, F. J. A. Hort, Harvey Goodwin, Clerk Maxwell, W. A. Porter (brother of the Master of Peterhouse), Alexander Macmillan, H. M. Butler, C. B. Scott, and H. Latham. The College eventually faded out for lack of students. But it had convinced Alexander Macmillan—as he wrote to his friend, James Simpson of Glasgow, in 1860—"that intercourse and the increase of knowledge between class and class would do more to benefit both the classes than anything else could. The petty jealousies and suspicions that exist in the one as much as in the other have done and are doing more to damage the country in all the vital interests than anything else. Among the students who attended the classes were some of the most vehement radicals in our working and commercial population. The University men who worked with them showed no sign of dislike, but treated them with the utmost courtesy and liberality."

Thus Cambridge influenced the thought of the Macmillans—Daniel and Alexander—who, with the help of Archdeacon Hare, acquired the book-selling business of Richard Newby, at 17, Trinity Street. It prospered so well that they removed to No. 1, Trinity Street, and acquired the famous bookshop of Thomas Stevenson. There the brothers welcomed undergraduates and dons to talk over books and exchange ideas—a custom revived before the War by Mr. Robert Bowes*, who


* Mr. Robert Bowes, who came to Cambridge in 1846, died in 1910. Some of his recollections of Trinity Street (still the bookselling centre of Bowes and Bowes) will be found in the "Life and Letters of Alexander Macmillan" by C. L. Graves.

became the head of the Cambridge business after the Macmillans made London the centre of their publishing house. Such gatherings were enjoyed by Alexander Macmillan till his removal to London in 1863, when the firm took over from J.W. Parker and Son, who had been associated with the publications of the Christian Socialists, many of their books of Co-operative interest.

The same year, 1868, that the workingmen of Cambridge were considering the high margin between cost and selling prices extracted from the customer by the retailer of family requirements, Macmillan was corresponding with Gladstone on the "Book War" of that time, when efforts were being made for a few London booksellers "to practically monopolise the trade" by a novel price system. "I have no doubt," wrote Alexander Macmillan, "that Political Economy, 'buy cheap, sell dear,' have some meaning in the world, but they are not God, and may, I fear, have become—something else." The Cambridge Co-operators demonstrated their agreement with Macmillan's view—and scorned the theory of the old *laissez faire* economists. Some of them may have been students at the Working Men's College in Cambridge.

CHAPTER XIV

UNIVERSITY EXTENSION

NIVERSITY Extension was cradled in a Co-operative environment. The association of the pioneer of that widening value of the Universities with the Rochdale Pioneers was an adventitious incident on the legislative road of social reform. In the 1860's the North of England Council for the Higher Education of Women was seeking the education of women and also to secure married women's property to themselves. Mrs. Josephine Butler was the president and Miss A. J. Clough the secretary. They invited James Stuart, Fellow of Trinity College, to lecture to women in Manchester, Liverpool, Sheffield and Leeds. The interest of the audiences encouraged him to think of starting a peripatetic University.

Then came another fortuitous link in the chain of events. Parliament was concerned with rightful ownership of the property of married women. The private secretary, Albert Rutson, of Mr. Bruce (afterwards Lord Aberdare), the Home Secretary, went North to converse with Mrs. Butler and her friends on the subject. They talked of many things, including Stuart's lectures. But they were keen about the property of married women and discussed the experience of the Equitable Pioneers' Society of Rochdale which allowed (as did the Cambridge Co-operative Society from its commencement), married, or unmarried women, to hold shares, and exercise their voting power by

ballot.* Husbands who claimed the shares of their wives were denied the trespass. In thus maintaining the rights of the women the committee were acting against the law. The County Courts upheld the husbands in their contention that "what's the wife's is mine." Mr. Rutson arranged for a deputation from the Rochdale Pioneers to give evidence before the Parliamentary Committee then sitting. They went to London, exposed the inequality of the women with regard to their savings in the Co-operative Society and spent a few hours with the Home Secretary's private secretary. In the course of conversation they told him of the rule allocating $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of the profits to education and wanted his advice as to how to use the money to most advantage. Rutson counselled them to "consult James Stuart of Cambridge." Returning home they wrote him and he replied offering a course of lectures. They accepted. And that is how, and where, the University made contact with the working classes.

"It was at Rochdale" he wrote (in the volume of *Reminiscences* he circulated privately to his friends in 1911) "that the plan of having a class in connection with University Lectures originated," owing to the interest taken by the artisan Co-operators in the subject. He left his diagrams hanging in the hall till the following lecture and the men frequently looked in to discuss their meaning. The late Professor Fred Hall, of the Co-operative College, who lived at Rochdale,

* This was the rule in Co-operative Societies from the start of 1872 introduced the principle into Parliamentary elections. The Ballot Act

knew some of the Co-operators who attended Stuart's lectures and confirmed to me the deep impression created. At the conclusion of the course they presented their lecturer with an illuminated address* testifying to their gratitude for the quickening of their understanding.

In the autumn of 1871 Stuart presented to the Vice-Chancellor and Council of Cambridge University memorials from the Rochdale Co-operators and others to whom he had lectured asking the authorities to devise a scheme for the methodical oversight of the system of lectures and classes he had proved acceptable. A special Syndicate was appointed to consider the matter and report to the University. Of that Syndicate Stuart was the sympathetic secretary. By 1873 they were able to endorse the evidence of the desire for higher education as sufficient to justify recognition by the University. It was resolved that the future conduct of the Lectures should be undertaken by the Local Examinations Syndicate under a grace of the Senate. James Stuart continued as hon. secretary of the Movement until 1875, when he was elected the first Professor of Mechanism and Applied Mechanics in the University. But he sustained his enthusiasm for University Extension. Co-operators reciprocated his interest in their work for social welfare and invited him to be president of the Co-operative Congress, held at Gloucester, in 1879. He left Cambridge in 1889 to devote himself to furthering

* This is preserved in the Archives of the Board for Extra-Mural Studies at Stuart House, Mill Lane, Cambridge.

his educational ideals in Parliament and on the newly-formed London County Council. But he never forgot the lessons he had learned during his contacts with co-operators. He recognised that the early society had "very high views and exalted principles. But, like many such movements, it has fallen a good deal short of the high ideals of the founders, and the desire for dividend has proved in many cases the most potent factor now in the movement. I attach no blame to this," he wrote in 1911, "but one of its consequences has been that the $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. for educational purposes has been somewhat whittled away, and education has been interpreted as including all the advertisement and other expenditure by which people may be won to become members of the societies." While this generalisation expresses shrewd judgment of the tendency of an earlier generation it has been modified by the educational influences which Professor Stuart stirred into action. And it has no particular reference to the Co-operative Society at Cambridge, the educational committee of which has sought association with the educational authorities within its area for the realisation of its aims and has proved its full understanding of co-operative education, Learning and Earning the way to better human relationships. This reference to University Extension may fittingly close with mention of the Workers' Education Association which was the response to the appeal of young Albert Mansbridge (now Dr. A. Mansbridge) and Robert Halstead—two employees of the movement at the Peterborough Congress of 1898, for more associative efforts for working class


education. Bishop Mandell Creighton, the Romanes lecturer at the University of Cambridge, was the president of that Congress and aroused Co-operators to attention when he reminded them that in complacently accepting the adage, "Knowledge is Power," they should face the fact that its antithesis, "Ignorance is Impotence," was equally true. Thus the great historian spoke in the tradition of Dr. W. King (Fellow of Peterhouse) who, 70 years before, had proclaimed in *The Co-operator*, that Power was directed by Knowledge to Happiness.



A corner in the Library of the Employees' Social Club and Institute

CHAPTER XV

CAMBRIDGE AND THE CONGRESS

HE start of the Cambridge Society synchronised with the beginning of the annual Co-operative Congresses from which the Co-operative Union has evolved into the National Co-operative Authority. Consideration of the preliminary preparations kept the pioneers of each busy in 1868; both got to grips with the business in 1869. On the committee organising the Congress appeared the name of the Rev. Charles Kingsley, described as of the "University of Cambridge," and the Rev. W. N. Molesworth, M.A., who had gone from St. John's and Pembroke Colleges to be vicar of Spotland, near Rochdale, in 1844—the same year in which the famous store was opened in Toad Lane, Rochdale. He saw the rise of the Co-operative Movement, and in his *History of England*, 1830–1874, gave personal testimony to the value of Co-operative Societies in developing the resources of the working classes, and tending to "raise them morally, socially and intellectually as well as materially."

Tom Hughes (author of *Tom Brown's Schooldays*) presided over the first Congress held in London in 1869—a month before the quarterly meeting of the newly-fledged Co-operative Society at Cambridge empowered the committee to pay their woman storekeeper of the little room they rented at 8, City Road, the sum of 10s. a week, the silver lining to her service for the members. E. V. Neale and J. M. Ludlow who had been mainly responsible

for the Industrial and Provident Societies Act of 1852, were the great figures in that assembly. Both were barristers. The latter became the Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies and certified the rules of Co-operative Societies; the former gave 28 years of devoted effort to the guidance of the associations which introduced the new principle of sharing profits with the purchasers. Prestige came to the movement by distinguished public men, statesmen and professors examining and expounding the progress of Co-operation at the Annual Congresses.

Thus the Co-operative Congress focused attention on the economic power and moral principles of the mutuality practised in shops and factories. Cambridge men helped the Co-operative advance along lines of thoughtful purpose. At the 1879 Congress at Gloucester, James Stuart, Professor of Mechanism at Cambridge University, delivered the inaugural address telling Co-operators :—

“Your movement cannot repose on the good sense of a few; its success will depend on the good sense of the masses of your people Education is desirable for all mankind; it is life's necessity for Co-operators.”

Sedley Taylor, M.A., of Cambridge, presided at the Congress at Derby in 1884, and also assisted E. V. Neale, G. J. Holyoake, and E. O. Greening, in the formation of the Labour Co-partnership Association that fostered the formation of many

of the Co-operative Productive Societies* which, enrolled under the ægis of the Co-operative Productive Federation, have demonstrated the worker's place in the direction of his industry and his equitable participation in the results.

Ipswich was the scene of the Congress of 1889, when the Cambridge Society, which had joined the Co-operative Union, was represented by C. Flatters, Mr. Meaden, and Mr. Ben Mills. Many of the delegates visited Cambridge where they were welcomed by the Vice-Chancellor of the University, the Rev. G. G. Searle, D.D., Master of Pembroke, and found that the seat of learning was a Co-operative association of scholars bound together to teach. Professor Alfred Marshall's presidential address was an important contribution to Co-operative literature. Born in London in 1842, Marshall went to St. John's College, Cambridge and succeeded Fawcett as Professor of Political Economy in 1884. He had been attracted to the study of political economy by seeing the conditions of the people living in poor streets and came to the conclusion that "economics is not a body of concrete truth but an engine for the discovery of concrete truth." This idea was developed in an article in the C.W.S. Annual for 1885 and, emphasised in his Congress address, led to the publication of his *Principles of Economics* in 1890—the first "net price" book published by Macmillan. Co-operators, too, pay tribute to the

* The Cambridge and District Co-operative Society has assisted more than a dozen of these societies with capital, and with trade.

Professor for having led Mr. C. R. Fay, M.A.,* to the study of Co-operation, which he has explored with analytical insight in this country and abroad.

When the Congress met at Bradford in 1911, Professor D. H. Macgregor, M.A. (Trinity College), who had been lecturer on Political Economy at Cambridge, 1904-08, aroused the attention of Co-operators to the advancing menace of Trusts and Syndicates—of which they have had abundant evidence in these past years. Four years later, at the assembly at Leicester, Aneurin Williams, M.A. (St. John's) and a whilom M.P., was the last of the Cambridge students and professors to address Co-operators in their Congresses. Aneurin Williams was an ardent advocate of their cause. He helped Edward Bernstein in the translation of the speeches at the International Co-operative Congress at Hamburg in 1910; and in the *Contemporary Review* of November, 1914, he outlined a "League of Peace and Mutual Protection among Nations"—an idea which found some expression in the League of Nations, after the Armistice seemed to be the beginning of Peace in the World. To keep the new view before the country a League of Nations Society was formed of which Aneurin Williams was hon. Secretary, with the Rt. Hon. Sir W. H. Dickinson, M.P. (Trinity College) as chairman of the committee upon which were such distinguished Fellows and scholars of Cambridge

* Mr. C. R. Fay, M.A., studied Co-operation in England and overseas before going to Toronto as Professor of Economic History. Since 1930 he has been Reader in Economics at Cambridge University. While he has expounded the policy of Co-operation his son has provided an example of the hereditary principle in his interest in the employees of the Cambridge Co-operative Society. They gratefully pay tribute to his "coaching" of their "Beehive" oarsmen on the River Cam.

as the Rev. W. Moore Ede (St. John's), Dean of Worcester, Rev. Dr. Inge (King's), Dean of St. Paul's, Mr. Noel Buxton, M.P. (Trinity), Mr. David Davies, M.P. (King's), with Sir J. T. Agg-Gardner, M.P. (Trinity), and Sir Francis Younghusband, D.Sc., Camb., among the vice-presidents. And at the Co-operative Congress of 1915, Aneurin Williams dealt with Co-operative efforts in different countries in relation to their international outlook. The Cambridge Society continues his tradition by its membership of the International Co-operative Alliance.

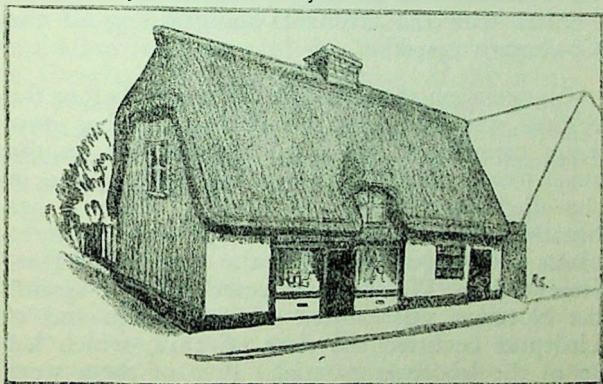
Kingsley and Molesworth gave Cambridge a place at the first Congress in 1869, and A. Williams was the last of the Light Blues to be on its platform as an advocate. That was in 1915. Since the War, all its presidents have been elected from the Co-operators who guide the societies along the path of social welfare. They have been drawn from the masses of the members upon whom the success of the movement depends—as foreshadowed by Stuart. And the Movement is grateful for the inspiration given by University men in the day of small things.

Contact between the University of Cambridge and the Co-operative Movement is now well sustained by Mr. G. Walworth, M.A. Dip. Agric. (St. John's College), who, as the Agricultural Organiser of the Co-operative Union—with which the Cambridge Society has had distinguished association since its formation—is engaged in linking those who labour in the fields with those who work in factories in the chain of Co-operation.

A VILLAGE STORE

The branch which serves the villages of Melbourn and Meldreth harmonises with the old-world cottages that linger in the hamlets and recall the warmth and simplicity of the countryside in the years when Co-operation began in the fenlands. A pair of cottages were adapted as a village store by the Cambridge Society in 1923. The thatched roofs were retained to preserve the ancient character of the place. But all within was modernised to serve the provisioning of the people.

Twelve years later, extensions were made at the rear providing storage accommodation to ensure the adequate service of the people who have responded to the Co-operative principle in helping to preserve the neighbourliness of mutual trade. This little store does a business of over £100 a week—and is the pride of the village; for it belongs to the people and, as one old fellow glowingly told the writer, "It's our very own."



Melbourn Branch

CHAPTER XVI

COUNTY CO-OPERATION



MHILST the Cambridge Society with its membership on the way to 30,000, is the leading influence in the Co-operative organisation of the county, it enjoys the neighbourly regard of some other societies that are doing their best to maintain the welfare of the communities in which they operate. In the friendly atmosphere of mutual association, the whole of Cambridgeshire is being brought into the national movement.

At Sawston, the Society has been in existence for just over 70 years rendering service to the dwellers in that pleasant little town that is now experiencing the changing shopping conditions of the countryside. It has maintained its place on the Co-operative map and has seen the extension of the boundaries of its bigger neighbour across its borders with the resultant strengthening of the Co-operative position.

Co-operation took root in Ely a year before the Society was formed in Cambridge. It has now 3,725 members in the old Cathedral city, in the small towns of Littleport and Haddenham, and in the single-street village of Sutton. Thus it has branched out from the glorious episcopal centre to places of historical interest in the story of the fens. Hereward the Wake's three years' struggle against the Normans was centred at Haddenham and at Littleport occurred the riots of 1818, which led 80 of the labourers to trial. Five of them were

executed and five others were transported for life—the result of their participation in the agitation against the Enclosure Acts, and the draining of the fens which reduced them to starvation. Co-operation has entered the village with its beneficent influence on the cost of living and its opportunity to raise the standard of life for all who labour. The draining of the fens was a great adventure for Soham. Fruit now grows on a few thousand acres that were formerly bogs and swamps. A Co-operative Society began in 1890, and its 600 members have realised the value of their mutual association in shopkeeping.

In the northern area of the county, the Society at Peterborough has spread its Co-operative influence over a wide area and has approximately 9,400 adherents in Wisbech, March, Whittlesey, and Manea. Peterborough Co-operators pioneered in 1877, and have penetrated into the Cromwell country of Huntingdon, and into Stamford where, from Barnack Rectory, Charles Kingsley found the inspiration for *Hereward the Wake*, as he looked on Crowland and saw the beauty of the fens—the beauty he described, in a lecture in the Mechanics' Institute of Cambridge in 1867, as reflecting “the mystery and majesty which haunted the deep fens for many hundred years.”

Nearer the University town is Newmarket, where in 1899, railwaymen, building trade operatives and other trade unionists gathered with stable lads and many who were not trade unionists, in the club-room of the “Horse and Waggon” to consider the formation of a Co-operative Society. On

behalf of the Co-operative Union, I attended to explain the procedure; they formed their society which has now 4,266 members who delight in the possession of the most distinguished emporium in the town. The newest of the Co-operative societies in Cambridgeshire is that of the market town of Chatteris where 940 families testify to the value of Co-operation.

This rapid glance at the other Co-operative outposts in the county suggests the quickening progress of a Movement that had no evidence three-quarters of a century since. Now it is the main distributor of the household commodities of the majority of the people—and a helpful factor in the prosperity of the countryside. For it stretches to the rural population of the fenlands providing a reciprocal service for the small cultivator, the fruit grower, the market gardener and the farmer. Agricultural comfort and industrial content are linked in the chain of Co-operation that the Cambridge Society has thrown across the county uniting all the people in a common interest. Recent years have seen the development of regional Co-operative Societies along the main transport tracks amalgamating or federating to enable the comprehensive service of the larger organisations to be available for those in membership with the smaller units. Ere the century shadows the age in which we live, Cambridge may be a Co-operative County—a colony of good intent and fulfilled hopes.

VETERANS IN THE SERVICE

There are 700 people in Co-operative service in Cambridge. Progress since the Jubilee has found employment for many who are proud of the Society; and are maintaining the tradition of the 63 faithful folks who have been with the organisation for 21 years and more. The names of these well deserve to be recorded in this volume of 70 years of Cambridge Co-operation:—

Secretary :

Mr. E. DARLINGTON, J.P.

General Manager :

Mr. J. QUINCEY

Assistant Secretary :

Mr. E. B. LILLEY

Office Staff :

Messrs. W. A. CASH, W. E. MASON, Miss E. D. CROXALL

Grocery (Central) :

Messrs. C. J. ALLEN, C. W. LAMBERT, C. J. LANTON,
E. J. MANSFIELD, Miss A. L. SUSSUM

Grocery Branches :

Messrs. W. D. BRITTAIN, C. W. BRITTAIN, A. W. BROWN,
S. L. COE, S. J. CREAM, C. FARRINGTON, A. E. FORSDYKE,
S. GILSON, P. HARRADINE, A. IVES, T. B. KINGSNORTH,
E. R. LEWIS, S. E. SHARP, C. WALKER, W. C. WOODROFF

Grocery Warehouse :

Messrs. H. W. JACKSON, D. STAINES, Miss C. M. OAKFORD

Bakery :

Messrs. A. ETHERIDGE, A. G. FORDHAM, H. B. FORDHAM,
W. J. FREEMAN, R. GILLINGS, C. LOKER, A. H. NIXON,
A. C. READER, H. SEARLE

Co-operation in a University Town

Bakery (Distribution) :

MESSRS. R. W. BLAKE, H. EVANS, H. HULL, H. MALLION,
F. H. MARSH, W. PETTITT

Boots and Shoes :

MESSRS. H. CARTER, E. C. NORRIS, R. F. WISHER

Furnishing :

MESSRS. E. BELL, W. R. P. STILES, Miss M. TOOKEY

Drapery :

Miss E. E. GILBEY

MRS. A. L. WILKIN

Coal :

MESSRS. A. T. EDWARDS, C. MANSFIELD

Dairy :

Miss E. THOMPSON

Mutuality Club :

MESSRS. S. J. DRANE, W. E. G. TOOKEY

Stables :

MESSRS. T. BLAZLEY, T. A. TINGEY, J. WISBEACH

Motors :

MESSRS. F. H. DRANE, M. J. PETTIT, S. C. WOODROFF



